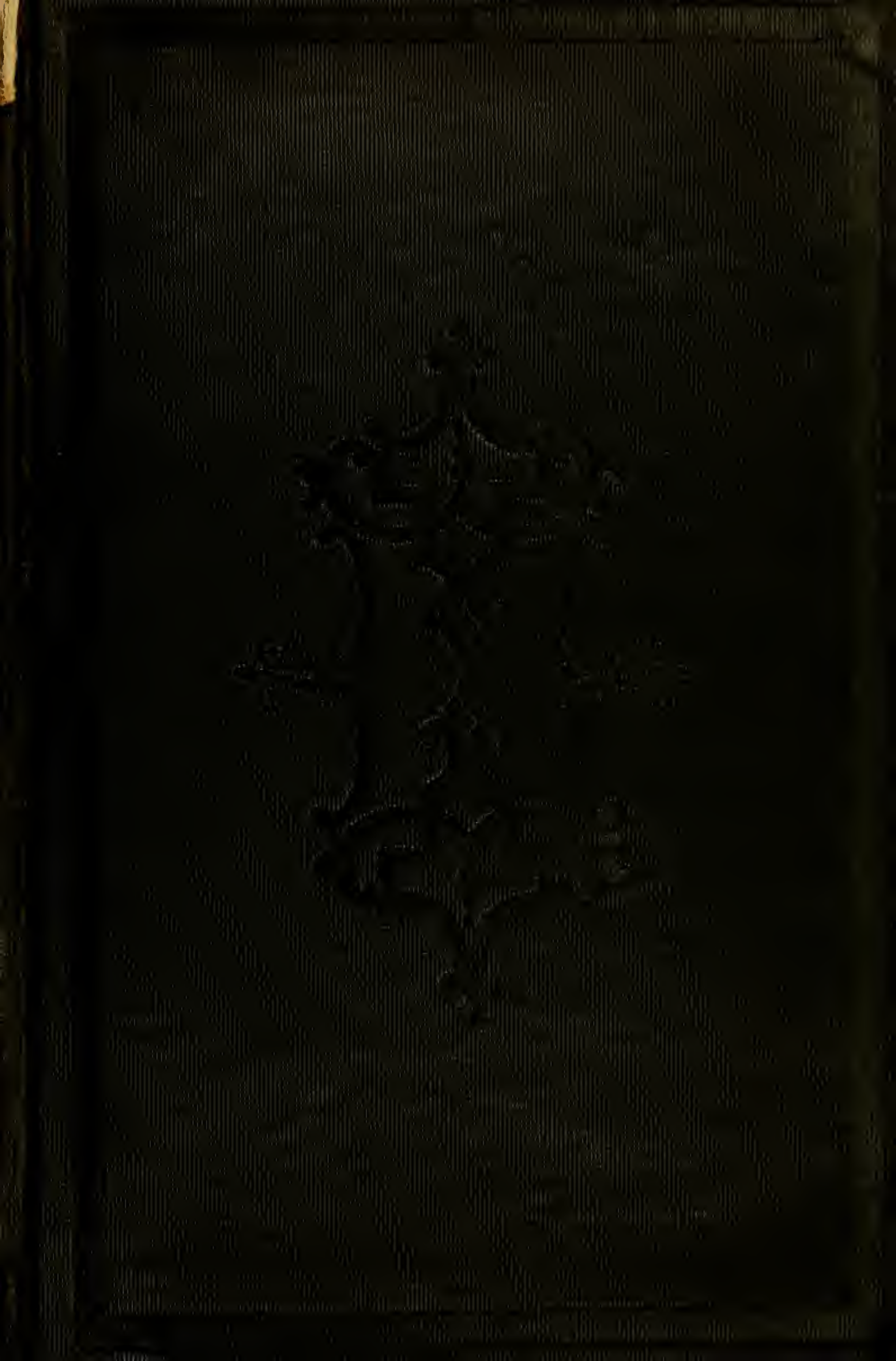












THE

# APOCALYPSE UNVEILED.

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THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THE RESURRECTION,

AND

THE MILLENNIUM,

*Presented in a New Light.*

THE REPOSSESSION OF PALESTINE BY THE JEWS AND THEIR CONVERSION TO CHRIST AS THEIR MESSIAH.

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# THE APOCALYPSE UNVEILED.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE SUCCESS OF THE REFORMATION, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION.

The thirteenth chapter has just given us a rapid sketch of the political history of Europe under the form of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, likewise of the rise of another power under the form of the beast with *two horns*, whose manner of speaking like a dragon shows that it was also political ;—it was, in fact, the politico-religious power of the Romish Church existing simultaneonsly with the first great beast, and acting in concert with it. Of this harmony in the action of the two beasts we shall see more in a future chapter.

Nothing occurred to call out the religious character of the two beasts, and to exhibit its persecution and bigotry, until the early part of the sixteenth century, when Luther commenced a public and systematic opposition to the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome.

The Reformation was met at its first appearance by the violence and bigotry which distinguished the heathen opposition to the infant Church of Christ in Rome ; and the two beasts of the thirteenth chapter set themselves to put it down. But the struggle which this purpose produced is not alluded to in that chapter for the reasons stated, that the chapter is entirely political in its description. But, turning to the thirteenth chapter, we shall find the contest most distinctly re-

ferred to; and there we shall see the *woman*, representing the gospel church, surrounded by enemies, but still gaining ground, being nourished and fed in her wilderness state.

But the prophet, after the episode of the thirteenth chapter, in which he treats of the political powers of Europe, and shows that its whole religious system was nothing more than a government of *moral tyranny*, returns to acquaint us, as he does in the fourteenth chapter, with the result of the contest between this tyranny and the Reformation. This result is seen in the first five verses of the chapter, and it is remarkable what an affinity there is between the language of the royal prophet of Judah* and the prophet of the Christian Church. Did they both refer to the same event? No doubt they did.

1. *And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

2. *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:*

3. *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.*

4. *These are they which are not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb withersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from amongst men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

5. *And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

These five verses show the success of the Reformation to the point where Protestantism became established. It had conquered its enemies so far as to secure equal rights with them in the free exercise of its religion. This picture is designed to show the first separate and independent establishment of Protestantism as a church, when it was placed beyond the reach of the authority and power, either secular or

* Psalm ii.

ecclesiastical, of the popedom. She has overcome the political power of the great beast, and the religious tyranny of the two-horned beast, and she is now represented by the prophet as standing with the Lamb on the mount Sion.

The meaning of this figurative scene is, that the Protestant Church, or the Church of the Reformation, had taken a position before the world so elevated in point of morality and piety, that her doctrines were clearly seen by men to be from Christ. This is implied by the Lamb standing with them. This is the first great feature of the church ; it is the *Church of Christ*, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, having his Father's name written in their foreheads—that is, they have the *knowledge* of the true God ; their *knowledge* of *salvation* is derived from the *Word of God*, and not from the dogmas of a fallen and corrupt church.

This triumph of the religion of Christ is represented in the second verse as causing great joy, and producing wonderful and happy changes in the condition and prospects of men.

Great changes in the civil or religious condition of nations are represented in prophetic style, by sounds that are heard at a great distance; startling and astonishing the people who hear them. Hence, the prophet says, when this scene of the Lamb and the multitude of the redeemed appeared : *And I heard a voice from heaven* (that is from Christendom) *as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers, harping, with their harps.*

This was a loud voice indeed, which required the tremendous roar of cataracts, and the peals of mighty thunders to give us any adequate idea of it. But the changes which were to follow the Reformation, and reconstruction of the gospel church, were not over-estimated, even by this great voice. The voice was not the result of a wild tumultuous outburst of excited passions. The harps gave a sacred character, an order and mellowness to the great sounds, such as would harmonize them with the happy effects produced by a religion which breathes peace and good will to men.

But there is more implied in this great voice than merely religious transport. It expresses the general effect produced upon the nations by the establishment of the Protestant religion. The happy changes which have been introduced in civil government; the amelioration of the condition of the people, and the increase of light in all things connected with the happiness of man, have all come out of the success of the Protestant religion—the establishment of a scriptural and national Christianity in the earth. These are the effects which are represented by the great voice from heaven—they are still progressing, still enlarging the sphere of human happiness—and that voice is still widening and extending its sound. These changes which are represented by the voice of great cataracts and peals of thunder, may be considered as political and moral, and as bearing chiefly upon the governments and kingdoms of the world, in softening the hard and cruel features of despotism, and breaking the chains of tyrannical power. But another effect is described in the third verse, of an individual and personal character—this is the religious change which is wrought in the hearts and lives of those who embrace it. This is represented by the new song which the great multitude sung before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders. The subjects of the Reformation now enjoy the fullest liberty in the exercise of their religion. Openly, and without fear, they proclaim their faith and express their joy in the Protestant religion, in the face of the greatest earthly power, and amongst all nations dwelling in the four quarters of the earth.

This feature of the prophecy very well illustrates the present age of the world, when we behold the gospel in its general diffusion over the world, giving peace to the nations and happiness to the Church of Christ, before the throne and the four beasts and the elders, according to the views already expressed on this point, signify the four grand divisions of the earth and the nations that dwell in them. Through the effects of Protestantism, the gospel has been sounded—the

new song has been sung in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, besides the isles of the sea; that is, it has been preached, either by a living, zealous ministry, or published in the different languages of the earth. *And they sung, as it were, a new song.* The people heard this as something new under the sun, as something that had never been heard of before; whereas, it was as old as Christianity, as old as from the days of Christ himself, who was its author. But superstition, bigotry, and ignorance, false systems of religion invented or corrupted by men, had banished it from the knowledge of the people, and usurped its place. But now *those* are driven back, and the true light shineth again, by means of the Reformation and the consequent spread of the gospel in all lands. But there are still dark places in the earth, even in Christendom; there are multitudes as ignorant of Christianity as the Pagans of Rome were, when it first made its appearance there! In truth, true gospel Christianity has received its severest treatment from the hands of Christians—such as bore the mark of the two-horned beast, and worshiped his image! The reason why there is so much delusion, such an amount of ignorance on the subject of religion, the prophet explains in the third verse: *And no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty-four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.* In plain terms the prophet means just what Christ says, and his apostles have reïterated—that no man can learn, know and comprehend the gospel, but those who are redeemed by it—have experienced its power in converting and saving them from their sins. Such are the hundred and forty-four thousand, which does not imply a number at all, as I have before stated, but signifies equality in the Divine favor to *all*, of whatever *name*, or whatever *nation*, who fear God and work righteousness. The gospel was not given to man as a subject of speculation, but as matter of experience, a divine reality, a saving power; and the man who does not know it in this way is wholly ignorant of it; he

cannot learn this divine song in any other way than through this redeeming power.

It will be seen that I take this song, spoken of by the prophet, to signify the whole gospel scheme of salvation, with its saving power and the comfort and joy it imparts to the saints of the Most High; and that we may not deceive ourselves as to who and what those saints are we will hear the prophet's description of them as he gives it in the fourth and fifth verses.

The first feature in the character of the hundred and forty and four thousand is their utter rejection of all participation in the corruptions and defilements of the *woman.* The text does not convey the precise meaning of the prophet ; it is evidently a mistranslation. It would be more consistent if it read—"These are they which are not defiled with *the woman.*"

By turning to the seventeenth chapter, second and fourth verses, the true meaning of the prophet will be seen. It is there shown that the defilement he speaks of was spiritual—*with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

These terms, expressive of debauchery, have reference to the corrupt and demoralizing doctrines taught by the Church of Rome. That church is symbolized here by the woman, having a golden cup in her hand *full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication.*

All Christendom, before the Reformation, was stupified and intoxicated with the contents of this cup, which the woman pressed to their lips ; but the hundred and forty-four thousand, all those who had embraced the religion of the Reformation, rejected her cup, and would not partake of the abomination and filthiness which it contained. They are virgins, and they utterly discard the false doctrines and idolatrous worship, together with the vices allowed, authorized,

and sanctioned, by the church which this woman represents.* They kept themselves pure from her corruptions *by following the Lamb*, practicing his teachings, and looking for salvation by faith in his blood.

A very different religion from that the world had learned from Rome, which hid Christ from the eyes of the people, and taught them to look for salvation by the merit of saints and the worship of images. These, the prophet says, were redeemed from among men, and were the first fruits or early harvest unto God and the Lamb, which sprung from the seed that had been sowed by the Reformation. *And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

This is the brief but comprehensive description the prophet gives of the people of God. Where are they? Wherever they are found, and whatever name they may bear, they belong to the hundred and forty and four thousand; they are redeemed from amongst men.

In those two verses (the fourth and fifth) we have a perfect model of the Church of Christ, and a striking illustration of the virtues and graces which adorn and dignify it.

This fourteenth chapter brings us upon a new theater, where everything wears a new aspect. The old, ferocious scenes, in which dragons and many-headed beasts were conspicuous, are entirely changed. These have all disappeared, as wild beasts of the forest do at the approach of day. Angels now are the ministering spirits in the affairs of men. Quite a new influence is felt amongst the nations; they breathe easier, and man looks upon his fellow-man with a confiding sympathy, which assures him that a happier day has risen upon the hopes and prospects of men. The reason of all this is, Christianity is established in the earth. The people of God are no longer hunted, persecuted, and destroyed, for their faith in Christ; they now stand in triumph

* See the Sale of Indulgences by Tetzel, Sampson, and others.

with the Lamb upon mount Sion. The stake and the fire, the rack and torture of the Inquisition and edicts of despotic power, no longer assault and oppress the people of God.

The freedom which the Church of Christ now enjoys from all this tyranny and persecution is happily expressed in the sixth verse under the representation of an angel ; not creeping on the earth with fear and apprehension, but *flying in the midst of heaven*, in the presence of all earthly power and dominion, proclaiming freely and boldly the everlasting gospel to all nations, people and tongues. This angel represents the numerous and various means, such as the public ministers of the gospel, bible, missionary, and tract societies, and every other means employed by the church to extend the knowledge of the gospel over the earth ; and in this way it is eminently characteristic of the great revival and the wide diffusion of gospel religion which have distinguished the last hundred years of the church's history.

The sixth and seventh verses show precisely what was taught in the everlasting gospel which this angel promulgated.

6. *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*

7. *Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

The great principle of gospel command, as announced by the angel, is, that men should *fear God* and give glory to *him*. This warning was necessary to correct the superstitious fear that men almost universally labored under of the power of the Pope and his interdicts, anathemas, and excommunications. Wherever the authority of the Romish Church extended, this dread of its power held the people in a stupefied state of mind, and in a condition of moral slavery, as unfriendly to religious and intellectual improvement generally

as intoxication is to the proper exercise of the rational faculties. The woman, as we have seen, had debauched all nations with the cup of her abominations.

It is evident that the people had been under this fear of the Pope to such an extent that all distinct recognition of God as the moral governor of the world was lost out of their minds. To correct this false fear and draw the people away from their superstitious error, this first command is announced by the angel : *Fear God, and give glory to him.* The second command is : *And worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

Idolatrous worhip, in one form or another, is almost a necessary consequence of this ignorant and superstitious fear. Under its influence men are ever inclined to worship the creature more than the Creator. Angels or images, sticks or stones, or any sensible objects, present to them subjects of worship much more congenial with their degraded minds than the invisible God. The gods made by men's hands, and set up in the churches, private dwellings, or the public highways, are the objects of their highest veneration. Against all this idolatry the second warning of the angel is directed, but particularly against *image worship*, as being the most common form in which this idolatry was practiced by the Church of Rome.

The angel urges these commands by the solemn assurance that the hour of God's judgment is come. Men will no longer be excused in the practice of these degrading vices. Whatever excuse the days of their former ignorance might have furnished for their idolatrous worship, the light of the gospel now points out to every man the only true object of religious worship, and leaves him no alternative but the judgment of God if he now persists in degrading Christianity and dishonoring his Maker by worshiping saints and images.

The hour of his judgment is come, is equivalent to saying that a stricter accountability is now exacted of men, because

a day of greater light and freer religious instruction has arrived.

No principle in the divine economy is more clearly set forth than this, that God holds men to an accountability, the strictness of which is in proportion to the light they have and their means of improvement. This our Savior taught on several occasions: *Where much is given, much is required. He that knew not his Lord's will, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; but he that knew his Lord's will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* St. Paul reïterates the same principle in the divine government in the dignified and courteous discourse which he delivered on Mars Hill to the literati of Athens. After rebuking the degrading practice of worshiping gods made of gold and silver, or wood or stone, he says, the times of this ignorance God winked at—overlooked—mercifully passed by the errors and follies of men when they had no means of knowing better; but *now* that the gospel has come into the world, diffusing the knowledge of the true God and his will, he commandeth *all men* everywhere to repent, and turn away from these dumb idols.

For almost a thousand years before the Reformation nearly every feature of the Christian had vanished from the church. A cloud of ignorance and superstition had gathered over Christendom which effectually shut out the light of divine truth from the minds of the people. The Church of Rome imparted no spiritual light; her lamps had gone out, and the people groped in darkness, not knowing whither they went. They were the black horse of the third seal on which the Pope and the priests sat, goading and driving them on in the most oppressive and abject spiritual drudgery.

This ignorance, with its attendant vices, the people had no power to correct or escape from, and in the forbearing government of God his judgments were held back. But now the reformation has scattered the cloud of darkness, and the

light of the gospel shines again upon the earth. The things of the former darkness must now be laid aside, for the hour of his judgment is come, and men will be held to a strict account for the abuse of the light they have.

The prophet is presenting a review of the progress and effects of the Reformation. Thus far it has established two important principles : the first is, the proper object of religious *fear ;* and the second, the true object of religious *worship.*

Having produced so great a change in the religious character of the people, drawing them away from their former delusion, the effect would naturally be the downfall of the system which had deceived and corrupted them. This is announced in the eighth verse : *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city ; because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.* On the subject of the great city, the reader is referred to what is said on the eighth verse of the eleventh chapter. The name of Babylon is here added to show the cruelty and oppression which the people of God had suffered from the great city. A well-known characteristic of ancient Babylon was the unmitigated cruelty with which she oppressed the Jews in their captivity to her power. The title is added here to show a similarity in the spirit and temper of the two powers. The latter is not only distinguished as an oppressor, but also as a great corrupter of the morals and manners of the people. She made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. In the parallel text in the seventeeth chapter, it is said she made them *drunk* with the wine of her fornication. But, as the people lose their relish for this wine, and are reclaimed from their moral intoxication, the whole system supported by this religious stupor begins to fall. The prophet represents the final effect ; but the system is yet only in a course of declension, going down, but will finally be, as he says, fallen, fallen—Babylon is fallen. The ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses, contain a warning to

the nations of Christendom of the judgments which will surely follow if they persist in supporting the corrupt religion, referred to as the abomination and filthiness contained in the cup of the woman.

The Reformation had to conquer kingdoms as well as this great ecclesiastical Babylon. The civil powers were so united to the Romish Church, that, although the two were separate in their respective sphere of action, they were one in religious sentiment and purpose.

This feature of reciprocal support and mutual exercise of power, ecclesiastical on one side and political on the other, for the maintenance and aggrandizement of each other, is most forcibly expressed in the figurative language of the prophet, seventeenth chapter, second verse: *with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

The first branch of the text refers to the reciprocal exercise of power by the church and the thrones for the aggrandizement of each other. The Popes crowned the kings and emperors, and these in their turn confirmed the election of the Popes, and defended them in the exercise of their exorbitant pretensions. The second branch of the text refers to the unrestrained license granted by the church in the sale of indulgences and otherwise, to the exercise of the worst passions and principles of human nature.

It is manifest that such a combination of civil and ecclesiastical power would prove a serious obstacle in the way of the Reformation. Yet nothing is too strong for God; but still he chooses to accomplish his wise and beneficent purposes by the employment of such means as are compatible with the purity and dignity of his designs and the happiness of man; but if these means are despised and rejected, he then employs the rod of his anger. This is precisely what the prophet designs to show us in the next three verses.

9. *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,*

10. *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*

11. *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

The third angel lays down in these three verses the law which governs the divine procedure in relation to those people and kingdoms that uphold the power and authority, and maintain the religion of the two-horned beast, wearing his mark in their forehead and hands. These shall suffer the judgments figuratively expressed in the tenth and eleventh verses.

The support given to this beast as a religious system, and the opposition and obstacles thrown in the way of the Reformation, arose chiefly from the kingdoms and governments allied with the papacy.

"The powers that be" are ordained of God as auxiliaries in the great work of recovering the world from the deep degeneracy and moral barbarism into which it had fallen; and civil government answers this great end of all government only so far as its institutions rest upon the acknowledged sovereignty of God as the moral governor of the world. Whatever comes in between God and his government over the world, is the usurpation of a power which he has reserved wholly to himself. The apostle clearly refers to such a usurpation when he speaks of a power *sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*—(2 Thess., 11 chap. 4 verse.) The apostle, while he is instructing the Church of Thessalonica, takes occasion to deliver this prophecy and give notice beforehand of the blasphemous pretensions that would be set up in future ages by the pretended head of the

church. *He sat in the temple of God*, therefore the prophecy can allude to no other than an ecclesiastical power.

The ecclesiastical power which assumed this dominion over the spiritual as well as the temporal interests of men, struck directly at the moral government of God over his creatures; and tended, inevitably, to produce, sooner or later, a moral revolution. The Reformation struck directly at this power. It was the great outburst of moral sentiment, which felt itself to be unrighteously bound and oppressed. And what follows this effort to throw off the burthen of moral wrongs and oppression, but political revolutions? If we had not seen the Reformation we should not have seen the political revolutions which have followed it. The political or civil condition of man must be improved, to correspond with his improved moral condition; and this necessarily produced struggles and revolutions before it could be accomplished. Old things in this sense too, must pass away and give place to new things.

What has marked the track of the world's history with the wrecks of empire and the ruin of kingdoms, once strong in power and wealth, but this principle of opposition to the Divine government over mankind? If we look upon the face of Europe, and consult her history since the Reformation opened the eyes of men, we shall see these effects precisely where this principle is most in practice.

We shall see the nations which have the mark of the beast in their hand and in their forehead, tormented, as the prophet expresses it, with fire and brimstone; their governments revolutionized, their kingdoms falling to pieces, and others rising in their place only to meet with the same fate, and to be shaken down by the same powerful hand of moral and intellectual progress. We shall see intestine commotions wasting and impoverishing the nation, or the dread of them perpetually agitating and distracting the people.

The prophet describes this condition of the nations in the vivid language of the eleventh verse: *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*—that is, their suffer-

ing will be continuous with the existence of the cause that produces it—*and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

Now, let any unprejudiced man turn his eyes upon Europe, and look at the history of her nations for two centuries past, and he will not fail to see a living, practical commentary upon the announcement of this third angel, from the ninth to the eleventh verse, inclusive. Most strikingly will this appear in the history of Portugal and Spain, the two nations that were conspicuous in executing the Pope's commands to extirpate the heretics, meaning the promoters and subjects of the Reformation. These two nations distinguished themselves for their zeal in carrying the terrors of the Inquisition wherever the Reformation extended its influence. They were then distinguished for wealth and great political consequence, now they are sunk deep in national poverty, torn and distracted by intestine commotions, with hardly enough government remaining to them to be ranked as kingdoms ; groping in the darkness of their antiquated bigotry, without any of those great improvements which characterize the present enlightened day; holding the doubtful sceptre of their tottering authority with a palsied hand, and are strong in nothing but their bigoted adherence to the *mark of the beast.* Nor is Italy herself any better. Rome may be said to be a city of assassins, where murder is plotted through the day and executed in the darkness of night. The smoke of this torment may be seen ascending from other nations, from the same cause ; France has exhibited clouds of it.

Upon the other hand, we shall see the nations where the Protestant religion has been embraced, and where the light and power of a gospel Christianity are enjoyed by the people, living in a state of increasing prosperity, enjoying the blessings of civil liberty, and constantly developing great moral and intellectual powers, producing the most wonderful improvements in the arts and sciences, all tending to bring

mankind into a state of brotherhood, and to establish peace and good will amongst men. As a general rule these are fruits found only amongst the nations where civil and religious liberty are enjoyed by the people.

Let us now return to the prophet. He says that these torments shall be suffered *in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.* 10th verse.

The presence of Christ with his church on earth is one of the plainest truths in the Bible. He says: *wheresoever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

The meaning of this difficult passage seems to be, that the nations and people, amongst whom is the true church of Christ, are designated here by the title of holy angels, they belong to God in a peculiar sense; different from that in which all men are his. They shall witness these judgments upon the upholders of a corrupt religion, while, at the same time, their own peace and security are unthreatened. They behold nations around them, torn and distracted by storms of anarchy and revolution, but they remain in peace and quietness: their safety arises from the presence of the Lamb who stands with them in Mount Zion—the true church of God.

The rich poetic strains of the ninety-first psalm give us a beautiful description of that watchful care which God's providence exercises over the nations that walk in his law and fear his name.

That part of the psalm which is applicable to the present subject is embraced in the seventh, eighth, and ninth verses: *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eye shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, &c.*

This general view of the subject is confirmed by the twelfth verse, in which it is said, *here is the patience of the saints.* Here is the end to which they looked—here is the day of

gospel light and liberty, which had its dawning in the Reformation, and was borne along by the faith and patience of the saints, until it now reflects its light, not only over Christendom, but upon heathen lands, making the solitary places to rejoice, and the desert to blossom as the rose. The latter clause of the verse shows that this represents an earthly scene : *Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.* Language such as this can only apply to Christians dwelling upon the earth, and it holds up the purity and holiness of their lives, and the peace and security of their state, in contrast with those who are suffering the judgments of God's displeasure. The conclusion is, that all those scenes throughout this entire chapter refer to events which have their origin and consummation *in this world.*

13. *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.*

The doctrine contained in this verse is not announced by the angel ; but it is the voice of the gospel : *And I heard a voice from heaven, &c.*

One of the grand peculiarities of the gospel is that *it alone* brings *life and immortality to light.* What was before dimly seen even by good men, and but partially understood, is by the gospel made as clear and distinct to the believer's mind as any other truth which it proclaims.

This chief light of the Christian's hope, together with almost all the other truths of divine revelation, were lost in the general darkness which involved the church for a thousand years. It was recovered by the Reformation, and is now proclaimed by the gospel church as a most comfortable and encouraging doctrine. The prophet is commanded to *write it*—that is, to place it permanently and conspicuously before the world as the great solace and comfort of the Christian in his trials and afflictions of this life ; that whenever or however he may fall, he is blessed in his death, even more than

he could be in his life. Write it, proclaim it from henceforth, *blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labors.* They enter at once into rest—endless, glorious rest.

How needful it was that this doctrine should occupy a position in the foreground of the new gospel church, will be seen when we consider the absurd and monstrous assumption of the Church of Rome in presuming to control the future state of the dead. By the doctrine of purgatory, that church claims to exercise an agency over the souls of men after they have left this world.

To be consistent with a state of purgatory, the text should read: "Blessed are the dead when they have escaped from purgatory;" for surely they do not rest while they are in purgatory.

All idea of this intermediate state as a means of purification from sin of the departed, is exploded by the text—*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest.* When they die they rest from their labors; they go at once to this glorious reward, not to purgatory.

To this monstrous device of the Romish Church is very nearly allied the saying in the service of another church, "he "descended into hell." This too strongly supports the Romish doctrine of the existence of a state of purgatory after death.

The Protestant Episcopal Church disclaims all idea of meaning that Christ actually descended into the place of torment. But would it not be much better to drop the objectionable phrase altogether; and if they mean to quote the Apostles' Creed, to say that which would convey the true meaning of the apostle, instead of what he never meant to say? (1 Cor. xv.) Let us return to the text. *And their works follow them.* Not to a bar of final judgment, as some have supposed; but the influence and light of their godly lives while on earth still remain, and perpetuate their good deeds and holy example amongst men.

The life of a good man does not die with him ; it lives in the memory and is cherished in the hearts of his Christian friends who remain on earth ; and whilst the recollection of his godly conversation cheers and stimulates the weary pilgrim with fresh hopes and renewed purposes of holy effort, it often, like the writing upon the walls of Belshazzar, strikes the heart of the sinner with fear and trembling. When no outward voice will be listened to—when the minister warns in vain, and cries aloud to no purpose, from some silent tomb, where rests a departed saint, a voice comes up and smites the conscience of the ungodly with penitential sorrow.

Perhaps a pious mother, whose tears and entreaties were spent in vain upon her obdurate son, uttered, as the last expressions heard from her death-cold lips, " my son !" These words never left his ear, but kept his mother's holy life and pious counsel present to his mind, until he bowed himself to a voice from the grave which he would not listen to in life. Thus do their works follow them.

### THE HARVEST AND THE VINTAGE.

The remaining portion of the chapter, from the fourteenth verse, is employed in referring to the two grand divisions of the Christian dispensation, and in showing the mode of the divine government in each of them.

Upon this point I wish to make myself distinctly understood, as the views and opinions which I have drawn from the Bible differ materially from the commonly-received explanations of these verses. I speak of the two great divisions of the Christian age, in the sense in which I think the Jewish prophets and Christ and his apostles spoke of them—the first, a day eminently distinguished for its grace and mercy ; and the second, a day as eminently distinguished for the primitive dispensations of the divine providence—*a day of judgment.*

The former is the period when the mercy of God is employed in drawing and entreating men to repent and be saved;

when God, with all long-suffering and forbearance, is, in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world unto himself. The idea the Bible gives us of this part of the Christian age is, that the Divine Mercy puts up with every sort of insolence and insult which the sinner may throw in the face of heaven; that it bears long and is kind to men, to convince them that God desires not the destruction of the sinner, but rather that he should turn to him and live. But the words of Christ present the strongest view of the tender mercy and long-suffering shown to the wicked in this first portion of the Christian dispensation. He says: *All manner of sin and blasphemy, except that against the Holy Ghost, shall be forgiven unto men.* This is the character of the day of grace given by our Lord himself; this is the day he speaks of when he says, *work while it is called to-day; for the night cometh when no man can see to work.*

The common interpretation given to these words of Christ, that the night he speaks of means the state after death, has no fitness at all in it. It would hardly comport with the dignity and wisdom of Christ, as a teacher, to spend time in admonishing men that they will not be able to work after they are dead. It is the universal sentiment of mankind that death puts an end to all things.

It was not the death of the body that Christ referred to when he spoke of the night when no man could work. He meant that this age of great gospel mercy, in which the grace of God was urging and pressing men to accept of salvation, would have an end, and would be followed by an age as different in the mode of the divine dispensations as the night is from the day. Therefore he urges his church to avail herself of those gracious means to spread her influence over the earth—to do all she can do while this day and those means last.

The great day of these means of grace is fitly illustrated by the *harvest season* of the world: the time of gathering and saving men by means of gospel grace and mercy. Christ

compares this day to a harvest: *The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few, pray you therefore the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth more laborers into his field.* Jeremiah, 8 chap.: 20, employs the same mode of illustration: *The harvest is past and the summer is ended and we are not saved.*

The use I wish to make of these quotations is to show that the prophet, when he speaks of reaping the earth, does not mean the infliction of judgment upon the earth, as some commentators have imagined, but the contrary; he means a gathering of the people into the fold of Christ by the means which God's tender mercy has appointed for that purpose. The harvest state of the world is the gospel day, and is represented in the three following verses:

14. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

15. *And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.*

16. *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.*

The first of these verses presents a scene which the eye may dwell upon with pleasure. It does not show us the black storm-cloud, speeding its way over the heavens, and by its flashing lightnings and pealing thunders making the very earth tremble with fear; but it shows the soft *white* cloud which portends no angry storm; spreading its fleecy drapery over the horizon, and as it receives the rays of the descending sun reflects them in a thousand brilliant and beautiful hues.

Upon the white cloud sat one *like* unto the Son of man, wearing a golden crown, and bearing in his hand a sharp sickle. The whole figure represents preëminent power, pure and holy in its dispensations, as the crown of gold signifies.

In a word it is the gospel dispensation. Christ administers it by his Spirit! this is the holy person seated upon the cloud being *like* unto the Son of man. The Spirit is to do in the church, and in the hearts of the people, just as Christ would do if he were personally present. The sickle signifies the effective means employed in the salvation of men; as the sickle is the proper instrument of reaping the harvest, the white cloud shows the dispensation to be one of preëminent mercy, and not of wrath.

Another angel came out of *the temple crying with a loud voice*, to him that sat on the cloud: *thrust in thy sickle: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe!* What is this loud voice coming out of the temple, but the earnest and fervent prayer of the church for the spread of the gospel and the conversion of the world? And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle in the earth and the earth was reaped.

The power of the Spirit and the prayers of the church have been blended in this holy effort ever since the introduction of Christianity into the world. But not always with equal success. During the dark ages of the church, the time of her great apostacy, almost nothing at all was done but sowing tares. But when the Reformation had fully restored the day of gospel light, the cry went out: *thrust in thy sickle, for the time is come for thee to reap.* The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, at least so far as the latter has transpired, will ever stand prominent as the period in which the power of God and the conquests of divine grace were most remarkable in the salvation of men.

We have not yet reached the period signified in the last clause of the sixteenth verse: *And the earth was reaped.* Still the white cloud holds its station in the sky, like the covenant bow, and the angel, uniting his sickle with the prayers of the saints, is still reaping.

But this harvest has its end—this reaping comes to a close, and in the language of Jeremiah, multitudes and millions will

say: *The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.* When this will be is not for me to say; all that I shall undertake to do, will be, to show what is to follow the reaping of the earth; the chief characteristics of that time, are condensed in the following four verses of the chapter:

17. *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

18. *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.*

19. *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.*

20. *And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

These verses introduce the wine-press age of the world, and present a dispensation as different from the gospel-day as the night is from the day.

It is said in relation to the work of the first angel, when it was completed—*and the earth was reaped*, signifying that the dispensation of the harvest was ended. Then follows the wine-press dispensation.

This is the idea presented by those two representations. Nothing could more fully express the severe judgments, the fearfull calamities, which the Scriptures inform us will distinguish the latter-day trials, than the crushing pressure of the wine-press; and, as if to give additional force to the figure, the prophet says—*and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs*, representing these judgments as most fearfull in their effects and extensive in their operations. This has been taken by commentators to signify devastating wars, because mention is made of the flowing out of a great quantity of blood, even to the horses' bridles. But both the blood

and the horses, as well as the press and clusters of grapes, are figurative, and are used only to heighten the effect of the symbolical representation. The wine-press age will be an age in which the indignation of heaven against all ungodliness will be revealed by the most severe and overwhelming judgments, and that age will succeed the present dispensation of gospel mercy.

There is much to be said in support of this opinion of two distinct dispensations in the Christian era; but I shall not now enter fully into that subject, but will defer the arguments upon it until I come to speak of the *day of judgment*, which I intend to do in a separate chapter. Something more, however, may be said at present of the nature and design of the wine-press dispensation. Of its purpose it might be sufficient to say that it is to effect the objects which the gospel itself has aimed at—viz.: to turn men from their iniquities and bring them to the fear of God.

The wine-press age will not be a war of destruction and carnage of human life; but it will be an unrelentless war against the false and corrupt systems of men, by which wickedness is shielded, and the righteousness of God is opposed. These systems will all be broken down—scattered and destroyed like the chaff of the summer threshing-flour, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, be burnt up like stubble. Christ has reference to this wine-press day when he says: *The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.* The angels he refers to can be nothing less than the severe judgments of the wine-press dispensation, adapted to the purpose of destroying the institutions of ungodliness amongst men.

That the two dispensations, the harvest and the wine-press, belong to the Christian era, is evident from the fact that the prophet says he saw the two angels that directed and presided over each dispensation *come out of the temple*—that is, as he means to say, both these institutions will exist

successively in the Christian age of the world. When the gospel is no longer effectual in drawing men to God, his judgments will then be employed in revealing the wrath of God against all unrighteousness of men. The wine-press dispensation synchronizes with the seventh trumpet age. It is the symbol which gives character or feature to the administration of the divine government in that period of the Christian age—a time of severe and pressing judgments. But it does no more ; it does not signalize particular events. This the prophet does himself.

Another fact we learn from the prophet is, that this age of judgment is not for the people of God ; it is not intended to form the rule of the divine proceeding with respect to the church, and hence he tells us *the wine-press was trodden without the city.*

City, is a term used to denote Christian institutions ; churches, and even civil governments, or countries whose political institutions are strongly imbued with the doctrines and teachings of Christ and his apostles, are called a city. But still the term does not always imply a church entirely pure in its doctrines and its practice. It may hold the essential truths of the gospel, and yet incorporate in its practice things highly offensive to God. Examples of this occur amongst the seven churches of Asia—that of Thyatira particularly. So that when the prophet speaks of *the city*, we must look at the peculiar circumstances with which that city stands connected in his vision, in order to ascertain the character of the Christian church he refers to.

As before stated, the judgments and trials of the wine-press came in after the gospel or harvest age is over, consequently all those who were brought to God by the gospel, and were enlightened and saved by it, will not require the judgments of the wine-press age.

The wine-press being trodden without the city, can signify nothing else than that its calamities will fall only upon those nations and people who reject the gospel, and upon Christian

churches that hold the truth in unrighteousness, and have, by their worldly spirit and ambition, changed the truth of God into a lie, as the apostle foretold would be done. Such are outside of the city, not holding and practicing the gospel doctrines in their purity. This opinion will be found to coincide with the pictorial representation of the wine-press age, as the prophet saw it, in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XV.

### HE SEA OF GLASS.

1. *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.*

2. *And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.*

3. *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.*

4. *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

After introducing the seven angels who are appointed to execute the judgments of God in the wine-press age, the prophet gives a description of the first remarkable scene which was disclosed in this vision: *And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire.*

Fire is the emblem of severe and trying affliction—not always in the same form; sometimes it is brought on by wars, which consume nations and overwhelm the people with distress. Pestilence, and famine too, are amongst the calamities of which fire is the most striking emblem.

The fire which mingled with the sea in the prophet's de-

scription, is to be regarded in no other light than as judgments, or Divine inflictions, with which he will, in that period of the world visit ungodly nations. So common and universal will they be as to give character to that age ; it is spoken of as the *Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men!* So much, by way of explanation, of the fire which mingled with the sea of glass, or what appeared to the prophet to be a sea of glass.

The next enquiry is, what does the sea of glass represent ? I have just said that the fire is emblematical of the judgments of that day ; and, we must regard the sea of glass as representing the moral and intellectual state of mankind in that age. It certainly can have no reference to anything physical or natural. The progress and improvement of the human intelligence, even in the present time, is a subject of wonder and astonishment to man himself ; and from its state now we may indulge in the largest expectations of what it will be when that age arrives, which will be distinguished by the sea of glass.

In this sense the glass signifies transparency, a clear and quick perception of things ; when nothing is in doubt or darkness ;—the wine-press age will, in respect to the human mind, be a luminous age.

Christ and St. Paul both speak of this period in terms that leave us in no doubt as to the meaning of the sea of glass.

Christ says, to this effect : *that which is now spoken in the closet or whispered in the ear :* meaning the secret counsels and private schemes of men, which they are generally able to keep to themselves until they have effected their selfish and wicked purposes, will be as fully known on that day as if they were proclaimed upon the house top. Every thought, every secret purpose of the heart will then be made known, by the keen, clear perception of the human mind. Men will not then be able to conceal their evil designs under the cloak of religion; they will not then, as Pollock say : "Steal the

"livery of heaven to serve the devil in," without incurring the hazard of prompt exposure. Nothing that offends or maketh a lie can be secretly contrived in that day; the deceit, falsehood, and hypocricy, by which men now prosper, and deceive their fellow-men, will not then avail anything.

St. Paul, speaking for the church, says of this same period: *Now:* that is, in the present time or gospel age—*I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known. Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.* All things will then be known, and men will comprehend each other's motives and purposes as distinctly as they now see the features in each other's face. This great improvement in the human mind does not imply anything miraculous, it will be the natural result of the expansion of mind by improved modes of instruction. In almost every department of life great and astonishing improvements appear, but in the mode of teaching or imparting knowledge to the mind, the old systems maintain their position. These, probably will all be swept away, and be made to give place to methods of instruction which will rapidly expand the intellect and fill the mind with knowledge, as far above its present attainments as the improvements in the arts and sciences now surpass the uncivilized state of man. This will bring about a state of human intelligence corresponding with what Christ and the apostle, in the above quotations, say respecting it.

The principles and purposes of the Divine government, especially the judgments with which the Almighty will punish unrighteousness, will then be distinctly seen and clearly comprehended by men of that day. In short the age represented by the sea of glass will have none of that darkness, mystery, and uncertainty which now make the ways of Providence obscure and incomprehensible. Everything connected with man's moral accountability and God's primitive government will then be made manifest.

There is nothing in the present age of the Christian dis-

pensation, more mysterious and dark than the judgments of God. Of many of these we know nothing at all, so as to connect the cause with the judgment; and, it is very likely, we are frequently called to witness scenes of sorrow and to sympathise with men in their calamities, about which we should entertain different views, if we could see things as they will be seen in that sea of glass. This mystery has always shrouded the Divine judgments. The Psalmist was so amazed in his contemplation of them, that he exclaimed: *Thy judgments are a great deep!* comparing them to the sea, into which the vision of man cannot penetrate, and discover what lies concealed in its profoundest depths. But this great sea of God's judgments will become, as it were, a sea of glass, in which all the acts of Divine Providence will be as manifest to the enlightened mind of man as the objects which now surround us are to our sense of seeing. The fourth verse confirms this view. The song which the prophet had heard sung by them that stood upon the sea of glass concludes with this declaration: *For all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.* The people of that day will know, assuredly, that the calamities they suffer are not produced by the caprice or passions of men, but are in reality the judgments of God, now made clear and manifest to all.

The next feature connected with this sea of glass mingled with fire is, that which represents the righteous—the saints of the Most High, as *standing upon this sea of glass!*

The prophet speaks of these in the second verse: *And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.* These signify the apostate church, which had its existence in connexion with these enumerated powers; against these—against all opposition, the people of God prevailed: *And they now stand on the sea of glass; having the harps of God.* These represent the *city*, without, or outside of which the wine-press was

trodden. Their position : *standing on the sea of glass mingled with fire,* is intended to exhibit the true church of God in that day, as not connected with the judgments of the wine-press, she is not affected by them, she stands upon, or above them. This, I repeat, is a pictorial illustration of the saying of the prophet : *And the wine-press was trodden without the city.* The employment of those he saw, having the harps of God, and singing the songs of Moses and the Lamb, identify them as the city of the living God.

The great and trying judgments of the wine-press age, are typified by the fire mingling with the sea of glass. These judgments are the necessary means of contending with the proud and lofty intelligence of the men of that day. The scoffers spoken of by St. Peter, who will, in their pride, scornfully deride the threatened judgments of the Almighty against them.

Perhaps some of my readers do not yet perceive the application of these remarks, as explanatory of the saying of the prophet : *And the wine-press was trodden without the city.* I will, therefore, conclude what I have to say upon that point, by introducing the beautiful language of the Psalmist, in his XCI. Psalm, where he celebrates the safety of the righteous in the time of great calamity : *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee! Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, &c.*

The song of them that stood upon the sea of glass, concludes with the declaration that : *All nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.* This instructs us as to what is the true end of those judgments—this fire, that mingled with the sea of glass. It is, that the nations may acknowledge God, bow themselves to his authority, and make his will the rule of their government. This is the meaning of the song : *For all nations shall come and worship before thee*—and this they will do in consequence

of the judgments by which God will speak to them in that day.

5. *And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:*

6. *And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.*

7. *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*

8. *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.*

After the sea of glass, the prophet proceeds to speak of other remarkable features of this vision.

He saw the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven, *opened!* This corresponds with the disclosure of the last verse of the eleventh chapter, describing the scenes of the seventh trumpet, and confirms what had been previously said: that the wine-press and the sea of glass have their fulfillment in the seventh trumpet age.

Very little remains to be said respecting this notice of the temple, as it has been treated upon in the eleventh chapter.

But as it is now referred to by the prophet, in connection with the scenes of the present vision, we must suppose that he means to make other suggestions from it.

As this period now under consideration is emphatically a time of judgments, inflicted upon the wicked, the tabernacle of the testimony being *open*, may be designed to show that it is God, now speaking to the nations, and not men; and to do away with the belief which still clings to the religious faith of popish nations, that the bulls and anathemas of the Pope are the judgments most to be dreaded. But the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony being open, signifies that it is God, and not men, who is now present and speaking with the nations.

Under the Israelitish economy, when the door of the tabernacle was open, all the people knew that God was speaking with Moses, and they awaited with solemn awe the result of the Divine communication. The presence of God with the people was expressed by the open tabernacle then, and the *open* temple seen by the prophet signifies the same thing.

Out of this open temple the seven angels came. They are appointed to fulfill the wrath of God in executing his judgments in the last day. They are connected with the Christian economy; they fulfill and complete its great scheme of redemption.

The prophet is particular in describing the dress of these angels, not to gratify idle curiosity, or to excite vain admiration, but to show that the judgments which they are represented as pouring out, are a necessary part of the *perfect* and *righteous* government of God over men. TRUTH and *righteousness* are the fundamental principles of Christianity ; and these are designated by the purity of the white linen and golden girdles which the angels wore.

One of the four beasts is represented as giving the vials of the wrath of God to the seven angels. This judgment age will begin to develop where the religion of Christ has been most opposed, and where his people have suffered the severest persecutions from the enemies of God. This is in Europe. There has been the great struggle which Christianity has maintained with the principalities and powers of darkness and superstition, and with wickedness in high places, associated with and upholding the claims of spiritual Babylon to universal dominion. Giving the vials of wrath to the seven angels, is the same as giving evidence, that these peculiar judgments have begun to be poured out upon the enemies of God—the angels have entered upon the work of gathering out of Christendom all things that offend.

A more vivid description of the sensible presence of Jehovah, as it will be known in that day of judgment, is given in the following verse :

8. *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.*

This representation is taken from the scenes of the ancient tabernacle and the dedication of Solomon's temple. (See Exodus, xl. chap. 34, 35; and 1 Kings, viii. chap. 10 and 11 verses.)

The temple and the tabernacle were covered and filled by the cloud, and with the power and glory of God, in a manner so overwhelming that the priests could not stand to minister in the temple because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. In like manner the cloud covered the tabernacle of the congregation; so that Moses was not able to enter into it because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

The solemn awe with which Moses and the priests were effected in sight of those symbols of the divine presence, kept them from entering into the tabernacle and the temples; nor did the camp of Israel move forward at all until the cloud was lifted up from off the tabernacle.

The temple which the prophet presents to our view is filled with the glory of God and with smoke—the smoke corresponding with the cloud of the Jewish temple.

The purpose of this representation seems to be to impress all minds with the conviction that God alone is the actor in the scenes of the seven vials. All human power stands in silent awe before the wonderful works of the Almighty, and seems to say, in the language of profound adoration, *the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him. No man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.* This corroborates this view of the purpose of the temple figure. No strength or power of man could produce or restrain the judgments that will be witnessed under the seven vials.

The august presence of the power and majesty of heaven

and earth, as it is symbolized by this temple, is also celebrated in the appropriate strains of the forty-sixth psalm: *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolation he hath made in the earth! He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Israel is our refuge.*

And again, in the fiftieth psalm, there is a similar celebration of the appearance and grandeur of Jehovah: *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself.* These prophetic strains of the Psalmist refer to the seventh trumpet age.

There is another feature in which the temple of the prophet filled with smoke corresponds with the ancient tabernacle, and that is in the *pause* which the Israelites made when the cloud descended upon the tabernacle. They remained in their camp, and journeyed not until the cloud was lifted up from off the tabernacle.

I have already described the period now before us as being beyond the day of gospel effort. The gathering of the harvest will have ended when this period commences. The wine-press, the sea of glass mingled with fire, and the temple filled with smoke, all belong to this period.

This is the *silence in heaven* of the seventh seal. Christianity, or the spiritual Israel, pauses; its efforts to gather men to the fold of Christ have ceased; and the church stands still, and in silence beholds the works of the Lord. The church will be silent until the seven plagues of the seven angels are fulfilled. Then the cloud, or the smoke, will be lifted off the temple, when the Church of Christ will move forward

again ; not as she has journeyed hitherto, buffeted by her adversaries, and struggling with powerful enemies, but she will move to her appointed station, to her heavenly Canaan.

But what is to be done during this state of quietude of the Christian Church ? Much will be done. The Almighty is represented as speaking to heaven and earth, and commanding them to be still ; and they shall know from his works which he will then do that he alone is God. This is the period when the angel will go forth and gather out of Christ's kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity; and when, as the Psalmist says, *our God shall come and shall not keep silence ; a fire shall devour before him,* [mingling with the sea of glass,] *and it shall be very tempestuous round about him,* turning and overturning the nations that have rejected his word and despised his mercy. He will call heaven and earth to witness while he judges or *justifies* his people, and separates the vicious from the virtuous; vindicating his saints that have made a covenant with him by sacrifice, and denouncing his wrath against those who have hated his instruction and cast his words behind them.

In all this work the church has nothing to do ; this is the *half hour's silence in heaven.* The cloud now rests upon her tabernacle, and she quietly and peacefully awaits in her camp the issue of the storms of wrath which shake and alarm the nations, while God is making a final disposition of his and her enemies through the ministration of the seven angels. When the seven plagues are fulfilled the smoke will leave the temple, the cloud will rise from the tabernacle, and the church will then move forward once more, and will ascend to her final state in the kingdom of God. *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Such will be the glorious welcome with which Christ will then introduce his saints into the kingdom of God.

# CHAPTER XVI.

## THE SEVEN VIALS.

We have in this chapter the account of the pouring out of the seven vials. But this is, as yet, in the future, at least as to the final efforts of those plagues or judgments, which are represented as being poured out of the vials. The final effect may not be clearly seen for a long time after the operation of the causes which will produce it have been operating. It is no one, direct, and instantaneous act of Divine Providence which is to produce the result ascribed to each vial; but probably the causes will begin in some remote circumstance of small consequence in our eyes, and will gradually produce effects of as little notoriety. But these very effects will themselves become the causes of other and greater effects, and in this way the ultimate end of Providence will be brought about. Just as the stream which takes its rise from some obscure rivulet, and meanders its way through the quiet glen, gathering, as it goes here and there, the numberless rills which fall from the hill-side, until finally they swell out into a torrent stream, forcing every impediment, and sweeping away every obstacle.

Any attempt to explain fully the exact nature of those plagues might be justly regarded as presumptuous. But still, from what we have already been able to gather from the teaching of our Lord, his apostles, and the ancient prophets, as well as from profane history, we may offer conjectures that will throw some light upon the subject.

The design of these plagues, or judgments, as they are also called, is evidently to break down all those institutions of

men which propagate and perpetuate ungodliness, whether they be civil or ecclesiastical governments, political or social systems.

Nothing has served to maintain a false religion in the world so much as corrupt and despotic power, whether that power be civil or ecclesiastic. In proof of this, it is only necessary to notice the spread and prosperity of the Christian religion where the people enjoy civil liberty, freedom of thought, and the free exercise of religious liberty.

The overthrow of all such institutions as obstruct the pure light of the gospel, and to punish those who obstinately adhere to them, is the work of this great day of judgment.

1. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

2. *And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.*

3. *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

The first verse assures us that these plagues are appointed by God alone. The angels are commanded by a great voice out of the temple, to go their ways and pour out the vials of the wrath of God. God was in the temple, and it was therefore his voice that gave this command.

The first angel poured out his vial upon the *earth.* The term earth distinguishes mere civil or political government from that which is ecclesiastic, or, as it is frequently called, heavenly. Those civil governments are first struck, as being the chief supporters of a corrupt and antichristian religion.

The plague of this first vial consisted in a noisome and grievous sore, that fell upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. This sufficiently indicates that the sufferers under the first vial are

to be chiefly the powers of Europe that support the temporal power of popery and its image.

A noisome and grievous sore implies a condition of painful and vexatious irritation, and fitly represents those insurrections and revolutions which break out upon the body politic, and either entirely destroy it or totally purge its constitutional corruption. These governments, then, will be either quite destroyed, or their religious principle will be entirely changed, and they will not only cease to uphold the old corrupt politico-religious system of Popery, but will become its armed enemies, and will burn it with fire, as the prophet has before said in speaking of the ten horns of the great beast.

*The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, which became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea.*

Most commentators have considered this as a visitation upon some maritime power, and explain its allusion by the destruction of the Spanish Armada. But the sea, like everything else in this vision, is spoken of in a figurative sense, and any attempt to apply a literal meaning must utterly fail to give the true import of the text.

The subject upon which the second vial is poured out is, like the sea, immense in its *extent;* reaching as the sea does, from continent to continent. This is the meaning of the sea, as used here ; and how very appropriate the figure is, will appear, when we consider that the papal religion, which is the subject represented, did, formerly, not only cover all Europe, but by the indefatigable labors of the Jesuits, was extended to every continent on the globe. The sea became as the blood of a dead man! When the blood has lost its vitality, it is no longer capable of supporting the functions of life, and the body dies ; and because the sea became as the blood of a dead man, every living soul died in the sea!

A great multitude and variety of functionaries, spiritual and temporal : popes, cardinals, bishops, monks and priests, of every order and degree, have their life in this sea, and

when Popery loses its influence over men, and can no longer command the obedience of the people, then these will be of no more worth in the estimation of the world, than were the dead fish of the Nile, when its waters were turned to blood by the judgment upon Egypt. All these functionaries will then die, Popery having lost its vitality will no longer be capable of supporting their existence.

The resemblance between this sea, in the effects that result from its becoming as the blood of a dead man ; and the river Nile, after it was changed into blood by God's judgment upon Egypt, is very striking.

The Nile had always been an object of religious veneration with the idolatrous Egyptians, on account of the refreshing and delicious qualities of its waters. But after it became blood and all the fish in it died, and stank upon the shore, the river was then converted into an object of loathing to those who before had worshiped it ; they now hated the sight of it and turned from it with disgust.

This plague upon the waters of Egypt, in this respect too, corresponds with the effects produced upon the sea by the plague of the second vial. The whole papal economy will fall and the ten horns, or kingdoms, which before had upheld it—had worshiped the beast and his image—the prophet tells us in another place, turned with hatred from their former object of worship, and burned it with fire. This will be the end of the second vial.

4. *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.*

5. *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus:*

6. *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.*

7. *And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

The third angel poured out his vial in the fountains and rivers.

Rivers and fountains are the scriptural emblems of the grace and mercy of the gospel system, and they are used here to designate those countries, in which the Reformation took its rise.

A fountain is the source, or first breaking forth of waters; the river, is its increase, or enlargement. Both France and Germany are embraced in this designation. In France the first murmurs were heard, which, at first, grew into loud and decided reprobation of the errors of Popery. The Albigenses were the fountain, which first bubbled up in France ; and speedily met with the usual modes of popish discipline in that day, to suppress it.

In Germany, the Reformation, under Luther, became a river, which so increased in depth and force, that even in the days of Charles V. it swept away half of Germany from the Romish faith, and extended the Protestant religion into other countries. The subject of the Reformation has already had full notice, and nothing further need be said in relation to it ; it is adverted to now, merely to show the application of the figure of the fountains and rivers.

I consider that France and Germany are the countries referred to under the third vial ; and it is probable that their political institutions are chiefly referred to. The same mark of Divine reprobation as that which was made upon the sea, under the second vial, applies to them ;—they will become *blood !* denoting utter worthlessness.

The mysticism of German theology, and the infidelity of France, will become hateful even to those who once held them in the highest esteem. The prophet heard the angel of the waters, by which we understand the spirit and the doctrines of true religion ; and a voice out of the altar—the prayers of the righteous, uttering a solemn approval of the judgment : pronouncing it just and righteous, for the reason, in that they had shed the blood of saints and prophets, and

thou hast given them blood to drink! This, in a literal sense might be justly charged upon France and Germany, since Protestant blood was made to flow no where so freely as in those two countries. But this would be giving a literal interpretation to the words of the prophet, which I do not think would be consistent with his meaning.

It is not to be supposed that it was the fountains and rivers themselves, that this vial was poured out upon ; and as if to guard us against such a conclusion, the angel of the waters declares, that the nations alluded to by these emblems, had been guilty of shedding the blood of saints and prophets. The true scriptural meaning of shedding blood is, *taking away life!* The precepts and doctrines which the early saints and prophets, or teachers of the Reformation had given to those nations, were cast away, or had become so mixed up with mysticism and infidelity, as to be utterly worthless. They had killed, as far as they could, the true religion taught them by the zealous Albigenses, and the preaching and writings of the German reformers, and had substituted, in place of these, unscriptural and anti-christian doctrines. Having thus thrown away the water of life, after they had enjoyed its blessings, and adopted the corrupting waters of a mystical and infidel religion, it is declared a true and righteous judgment to give them blood to drink, for they are worthy of such judgments. The history of these two countries, for the last quarter of a century, looks very much as if they were under the third vial.

A nation can no more separate itself from the effects of its religion, than an individual can avoid the consequences of his own vicious habits. A spurious and corrupt religion will involve a nation in such crimes as God always has, and always must punish. The infidelity and mysticism which have turned a pure christianity out of France and Germany, will ever keep those nations under the judgments of the Almighty.

When judgments are employed as correctives, and are in-

tended to draw nations from their errors, they are generally mild, being mixed with mercy; but the judgments of the great day, when the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, and the seven last plagues which will be fulfilled, are not those judgments that are mingled with mercy; but are such as the apostle describes in the tenth chapter of Hebrews, 26th and 27th verses, where he refers to just such cases as those under consideration: *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which will devour the adversaries.* When such judgments are seen in the earth they will indicate the period of the third vial.

The fourth vial is poured out upon the sun. Under the sixth seal, I have given my reasons for considering the sun to be the symbol of England. Pouring out this vial upon the sun, designates the power that will be conspicuous as the instrument in carrying out the plague of this vial. It does not say that the sun was injuriously affected by this vial being poured out upon it, but that it had power given unto it to scorch men with fire.

I understand this vial to signify, that England will become the instrument in the providence of God, of inflicting some political judgment upon the powers opposed to the Protestant religion. Such an event may be brought about by the persevering efforts of the Pope, to establish in England and other Protestant countries, some hierarchal authority over the subjects of those governments. Efforts of this kind, persevered in by Popery, would probably lead to a counteracting policy amongst Protestant nations, even to the length of banishing the authority of the Pope from those countries. In this way, men would be scorched with great heat.

Aggravated by such defeats, they are represented in the agony of their disappointment, as blaspheming the name of

God, which hath power over these plagues. Showing that the subjects of this scorching, will be a people who held the doctrine of God's punitive judgments upon men. *And they repented not to give Him glory.* They still maintained their principles in defiance of what they suffered, and which they acknowledged to be the judgment of God upon them. This vial is in the future.

The fifth angel poured out his vial *upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness.*

There are only two beasts referred to in the Apocalypse, after the four described in the fourth chapter. Those two are the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and the two-horned beast, already described.

I consider the beast alluded to, under the fifth vial, to be the two-horned beast, or the *temporal sovereignty* of the popedom. For, although the universal dominion claimed by Gregory VII. continued only 666 years, the Pope is still a temporal prince, possessing and exercising temporal sovereignty in Italy, as other princes do in their kingdoms. In this sense only, and not in a religious sense, does the term *beast* apply to the popedom.

The seat of the beast then, is the whole extent of his temporal dominion. The fifth vial will be poured out upon his political, or secular interests. This view accords with what is said in the 27 chap. : 16 : *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.* Taking these terms in their natural signification, they are more applicable to the destruction of temporal than ecclesiastical interests.

The ten horns are, undoubtedly, political powers, and when they resolve to put an end to the Pope's temporal sovereignty, from whatever motives of policy, it will fill his kingdom with darkness. It will disorganize the whole system, and throw it into confusion. The chagrin and mortification of a measure so humiliating to the pride of the Rom-

ish hierarchy are expressed in this strong language: *And they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores.*

But although they will be driven out of the strong position they held by their temporal power, yet they will hold on to their ecclesiastical system; they will struggle to keep up the church, although they are stript of their worldly power: *they repented not of their deeds.* But it is not likely that a church which has from its first rise, been sustained by its connexion with temporal power, will long survive a separation from it. We shall see in a future chapter that it will not. The blow received from the circumstances of the fifth vial, so shattered its power that the whole system finally dies from the effects of it: *Every living soul died in the sea when it became as the blood of a dead man.* This will be the final result of the fifth vial.

The entire course of this vial will be political; and, amongst the circumstances which will mark its progress, will probably be measures of policy adopted by Protestant countries, to rid themselves of the interference of a foreign power, which, although ecclesiastical, may be found exerting a dangerous political influence.

The doctrine that the Pope is the spiritual *head of the whole church* on earth, requires the presence of his power and authority, in the person of some one or more of his various functionaries, wherever the Catholic Church exists; and, if the exercise of such power and authority was not permitted in Protestant countries—if ecclesiastical functionaries, deriving their authority from, and holding allegiance to, a foreign power, should not be tolerated in countries not under the spiritual dominion of the Pope, how soon his kingdom would be filled with darkness! Something will be done in the course of the fifth vial that will aggravate and afflict that church, even to the *gnawing their tongues for pain.*

But whatever those measures may be that will agonize the papal power, the prophet informs us that they will not have

the effect of changing or purifying its religion. *They blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.*

The conclusion, I think, is unavoidable from the text, that papal power, under the fifth vial, will become very much restricted in its authority and limited in its existence.

We shall see in the events which some of the succeeding chapters unfold, how wonderfully that church, which once ruled all Christendom, will be reduced and brought down by the acts of those very kingdoms, and how deeply it will be made to drink of the bitter cup which it once pressed to the lips of Protestantism ; but not in the same spirit of bigotry and bloody violence which *it* practiced,—this would be repugnant to the Protestant religion ; but in the total loss of the confidence and respect of the powers of Christendom, expressed in the utter rejection of the faith and worship of the Romish Church. (See chapter eighteen.)

## SIXTH VIAL.

### THE END OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE !

Following up the series of events which mark the progress of time and illustrate the page of prophecy, we come now to consider one which, in its consequences, will reach and effect almost all nations of the earth, while it cannot fail to impart a thrill of joy to every Christian's heart.

The scenes of this vial are not connected with any elements of terror and violence. There is no fire nor blood mentioned as the concomitants of this plague. A great change is effected without the interference of any of those agents of terror and commotion : it is the gradual and final extinction of the Ottoman Empire.

The Turks drove the Christians from Jerusalem, and planted the crescent on its ramparts and its temples. The land of Judea and all Palestine fell under their dominion, and

at a later period they pushed their victorious arms into Europe by the conquest of Constantinople.

All Europe was struck with dismay, and was in constant dread of these invaders. Their ferocity was equalled by their indomitable courage ; and wherever the scimeter was unsheathed, humanity afforded no protection against the violence and horrors of their sanguinary warfare.

Christianity was the scorn of the Turk, and the Jew was no less the object of his brutal animosity. And yet this power, with all its fearful might and merciless passions, is to pass away and disappear, like the dreaded icebergs when they dissolve under the genial influence of a temperate zone.

This vial is poured out on the great river Euphrates, and its waters were *dried* up. How simple and how quiet is the progress of this great change !

The reasons for considering the Euphrates as the emblem of the Turkish Empire have been already assigned.

The successful marches and rapid conquests of the Turks left them no reason to distrust the invincibility with which fanaticism had covered their arms. The boasted superiority of their religion over the religion of all other people, and their national pride, which led them to scorn and despise all who did not embrace the koran, were the chief causes of their ferocious and sanguinary principles of warfare.

But this proud disdain of all Christendom began to be checked by occasional victories obtained over them, and they were finally subdued and tamed by the battle of Navarino, where their powerful fleet was entirely lost, their ships were burned, sunk, and captured, and this great arm of their warlike achievements was irretrievably broken.

This blow had the effect of humbling the proud temper of the Turk, and brought him to regard Christian nations in a more favorable light. It led also to intercourse and commercial relations with the European powers, and ultimately obligations of a more friendly nature towards other nations assumed the form of treaties.

This commercial intercourse with other powers has worn off to a great extent the ferocious temper of Turkish pride, and, by bringing them to a better acquaintance with the rest of Europe and America, has at the same time shown them their great inferiority to almost all other nations, and has produced that conviction, spoken of by traders as being entertained by the Turks, "that their empire is destined, ere "long, to utter and inevitable dissolution." In the language of the prophet, the great river will be dried up.

This drying up of the Euphrates has been going on rapidly and sensibly to the eye of the observant politician for the last twenty-five years ; and indeed nothing has delayed its entire evaporation but the use that other powers of Europe have made of Turkey to preserve the balance of power. So soon as she is no longer necessary as a make-weight in the great scale of European politics, she will sink under the paralysis of her own enervating and debasing religion.

The drying up of this river will be an event of vast consequence to the world, in a moral and political view, even if it stood alone ; but that which is to follow it, and to which it is only introductory, is the subject which will fill the world with amazement, and all Christendom with joy. The design of drying up this river is, *that the ways of the Kings of the East may be prepared ;* or, in simple and direct terms, without the use of metaphor—that the way may be opened for the return of the Jews to the land of their ancestors !

Whoever has attentively perused the prophetic writings of the Jewish scriptures, could not have failed to be struck with the frequent, clear and joyful annunciations of this event, by the several prophets of the Jewish Church. Our prophet glances at it as a circumstance connected with the drying up of the great river, and then retires from the subject, as if he said : "Their own prophets have fully pro-"claimed this grand event, and I can add nothing to the "vivid and magnificent imagery in which they have presented "it." We shall, therefore, take leave of our prophet for a

short season, and follow his elder brethren, in their prophetic description of this glorious recovery of God's ancient people.

### THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

The term kings, as employed to distinguish those whose way is prepared by the drying up of the waters of the great river Euphrates, is not intended to convey the idea of positive royalty. It does not mean persons who wear the crown or wield the sceptre of empire ; it is employed to express *quality*, or preëminent excellence of *character*, arising from their former rank and station in the world.

Taken in this sense, the appellation of Kings of the *East* will be readily understood, from its correspondence with the names or titles which God himself and the ancient prophets, and more recent apostles, applied to the Jews as a nation. See Exodus, 19 chap.: 6 : *And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.* Deuteronomy. 7 and 26 chap.: 6 and 19 : *For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God ; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth, and to make thee high above all nations, which he hath made, in praise and in name, and in honor.* Jeremiah, 11 chap. : 3 : *Israel was holiness unto the Lord and the first fruits of his increase : all that devour him shall offend ; evil shall come upon them saith the Lord.*

These are some of the evidences taken from the sayings of their own prophets, which show the exalted station the Jewish nation held in the estimation of God. As the king is superior to and above all his subjects, so the Jews were superior to and above all other nations of the earth. The title of Kings of the East is in accordance with this high rank of national supremacy, and with the superior wisdom of the people. The East, in ancient times, was proverbially the seat of wisdom. Wise men came from the East to pay suitable honors to the new-born King of the Jews.

The appellation of Royalty, in a spiritual sense, is also applied to the Jews, by other writers in the Christian scriptures as well as our prophet. St. Paul and St. Peter address them as a *kingdom* of priests—a *royal* priesthood. They stood before the world in the two-fold character of kings and priests, and they alone, by their superior wisdom, could teach not only the knowledge of the true God, but also the sound principles of good government, and political economy.

These remarkable people still hold a title by the immutable promise of God, to the land of their fathers. The covenant which God made with Abraham, and afterwards renewed with Isaac and Jacob, has been handed down from generation to generation, and their abiding faith in the truth of God's word, keeps them in anxious expectation of the appointed time when they shall be restored to their beloved Jerusalem—when the long night of their dispersion amongst all lands shall end—when the veil shall be removed, and all Israel shall be gathered to Mount Zion.

Every one who reads the Bible must be struck with the deep solicitude that pervades the writings of St. Paul, in every subject which concerns his kinsmen after the flesh.

Discoursing with the Gentiles respecting the fall of the Jews, he asks : *I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid ; God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.* He admits that concerning the gospel, they were enemies ; that is, by their quarrel with the gospel plan of salvation, which had superceded their economy of burthensome ceremonies ; they had made themselves enemies of God, and cut themselves off from their covenant blessings for a while ; but still, as touching the election, they are beloved for the *Father's sake.* Blindness, in part, is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come ; until that which caused them to stumble, will no longer be a stumbling block in their way ; and so (or then) all Israel shall be saved—be restored to their ancient possessions, and to much more than their former glory.

But to return to the Euphrates. For centuries past and down to the present day, the land of Canaan has been under the dominion of Mohammedanism. The holy city has been trodden down by these Gentiles. Everything sacred in the eyes of the Christian, or dear to the heart of the Jew, has been the scorn of the Turk and the object of his disdain.

Their implacable hostility to the Jews, while it remains, must continue to obstruct the way of that people to the repossession of their ancient home, and keep them in their scattered and oppressed state amongst all nations.

The removal of this obstacle by the gradual waste, and the final extinction of the Moslem power, and the gathering of the Jews, are the two great events that are to signalise the era of the sixth vial.

By what particular means the Jews are to obtain the possession of their ancient inheritance, is not even hinted at by the Christian prophet. No intimation of violence is given as the mode of their return ; the river will *dry up!* it will not even be turned out of its course, as the river of Babylon was by Cyrus, by which he obtained an easy conquest of that great city.

It is quite possible that the Turkish government will become so much impoverished in its finances, and so reduced and wasted in its political strength, that it will be induced to sell that portion of its dominion to the Jews ; vacate Judea for a pecuniary consideration, and relinquish what their poverty will no longer allow them to hold. The prophet Isaiah, in celebrating the return of his people, speaks of their great wealth, showing that they possess ample means of securing, in this way, their long-forfeited possessions. For the abundance of their riches they probably, at this time, exceed all other people in the world ; this is a fact, which the governments of Europe have, for a long time profited by in the way of immense loans. And, if the governments that have so cruelly and unrighteously oppressed and plundered

them, were compelled to make restitution, it would be a day of unwelcome reckoning with many of them.

But all Israel is to be recovered—God's word is pledged, that he will bring home his banished ones ; and he will see to the means necessary to his promise. He will not only dry up great rivers, but the great seas also, if necessary to the fulfillment of his word.

But the scenes of that day ! Who can adequately conceive them ? The strongest imagination staggers under the weight of their sublimity, and fails to compass the grandeur of the spectacle!

In every quarter of the world the stir and the excitement will be felt. The great continents and the isles of the sea will shake with the mighty move of the Jews ! They will pour down from the mountains ; and they will come up, like the swell of the ocean, from the cities and plains of all nations.

Ths Christian world will hail with shouts of joy the return of the children of Abraham ; while the Gentiles will gaze with astonishment upon the stupendous scene of the countless multitudes of Israel, moving in solemn grandeur toward the temples and tombs of their fathers.

St. Paul dwells upon this event with a glow of enthusiastic feeling, very natural to one as much devoted as he was to the happiness of his countrymen. He seems to labor for terms to express the wonders of that scene ; but failing to command them, and as if the grandeur of the subject had overcome him, he can only exclaim—*What is it but life from the dead !* Isaiah, in the forty-ninth chapter of his prophecy, pours fourth a flood of eloquent and joyful declaration, as the glories of this day rise before his prophetic vision.

The world-wide sensations which that day will produce cannot be conceived. The light of a thousand promises, like distant stars, have for centuries twinkled and glimmered in the sky of the Jewish scriptures, and seemed as if they would never become larger ; now, all at once, rush to one

common focus, and pour such a flood of light upon the world of mankind as will make every one see that this is the work of God : *Who of old spoke and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast.*

What will be the amazement of the world and the emotions of God's elect when this day arrives—when the sun-faced telegraph will catch up the cry of Isaiah, and fling it with lightning speed, over thousands of wires, into all lands! *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of God is risen upon thee.* The Jews will recognize the voice of their own prophet, and will respond in the language which he puts in their mouth : *And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him and he will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.*

The telegraph will be the ready mode of a general correspondence and concert amongst the Jews in different lands, with a view to their setting out to repossess their ancient homes. When they have decided upon their measures, then will the great steam-angel, with his feet of fire, walk over the sea and the continents with the swiftness of the wind, and will gather the sons and daughters of Abraham from the isles of the sea, and out of every land whither they have been scattered, and will bear them away in triumph to Jerusalem.

Who, but these people themselves, can appreciate the felicities of that occasion? Truly, this will be a happiness that a stranger meddleth not with. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning*, is a sentiment instilled by every pious Jew into the hearts of each succeeding generation of their children; and as they approach and gather upon the mountains round about Jerusalem, or move in solemn procession over the plains that spread out in view of her lofty spires and towered walls, they will give full scope, and swell to those national feelings of religious veneration which have preserved them a distinct race of people, while the great powers that oppressed and wronged them have been

lost from the recollection of the world. The whole nation will now lift up its voice, in tones such as earth never heard before, in celebrating the grand event of their restoration, in the language of their own royal bard, uttered in the forty-seventh psalm :

1. *O clap your hands all ye people : shout unto God with the voice of triumph :*

2. *For the Lord most high is terrible ; he is a great King over all the earth.*

3. *He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.*

4. *He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom he loved, Selah.*

5. *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.*

6. *Sing praises to God, sing praises ; sing praises unto our King, sing praises.*

7. *For God is the King of all the earth : sing ye praises with understanding.*

8. *God reigneth over the heathen : God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.*

9. *The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham : for the shields of the earth belong unto God : he is greatly exalted.*

Isaiah occupies the same position in the Jewish Church that St. John does in the Christian Church, with some difference as to the order of his prophecies. He does not exhibit that connection and application as to the time of the events, which generally prevail in the announcement of the apocalypse.

Isaiah's prophecies are given more promiscuously, and in only a few cases can there be discovered a regular chain of connection, running through as many as three or four consecutive chapters.

The spirit and design of his luminous discourses, however,

are already manifested in every part of his eloquent and powerful writings.

His comprehensive range of prophecy is not restricted to the Jewish Church, but, like that of St. John's, it is also addressed to the rulers of his people and to the kingdoms of the world.

Isaiah is supposed to have been a man of noble birth and of royal descent. The lofty tone of his discourses, and the undaunted manner in which he denounces the most fearful judgments against the wickedness of the rulers of his own nation, show him to have been a man eminently endowed by nature and by inspiration for the dignified and commanding position which he occupied in the Jewish Church.

With what tenderness does he entreat his people to walk in the law of their God, setting before them the evils that must befall them if they depart from his ways, and giving vent to his deep sorrow on account of the frequent apostacy of the nation! He proclaims the severe chastisements of God against their idolatry; he utters the punishment of captivity as the consequence of such an offence in the sight of God, and shows them the severe bondage to other nations to which it will inevitably reduce them.

But he never separates himself from the interests of his people. In his prophetic warnings and encouragements he goes with them in their captivity, and consoles them with hopes of deliverance. He sits down and weeps with them by the rivers of Babylon, while the silent harp hangs upon the pendant willow. His soul is filled with anguish because of the sufferings of his people, and with indignation at the mockery and contumely with which they are treated by their enemies. His noble spirit, chafed and wounded, rises and swells with indignation against the oppressors. He asserts the deliverance of his people—calls upon them to turn unto God, and cry to the Most High for help. He assures them that he who hath wounded will heal again, he who hath broken will bind again. Then, turning to their proud oppres-

sors, he flings the wrathful denunciations of heaven in the face of Egypt and Babylon—those incorrigible tyrants of the earth, whose cruel power had crushed and ground his people to the very dust, and, in terms of profound indignation, he dooms them to the unerring retribution of a just and an avenging God.

Foreseeing the downfall of all these kingdoms, that so frequently oppressed and plundered his nation, and the return of all Israel unto God, and to the inheritance of their fathers, he utters in strains of triumph the consummation of their glory, in the language of the forty-ninth chapter of his prophecy. There his full soul swells with joy, as he proclaims the unequalled glories which will distinguish the Jewish people on that day.

Before we leave this subject, it will be worth while to hear this noble prophet of Israel, in the remarkable manner in which he speaks of the various means by which the Jews will return to their ancient possessions. He says: *Thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. The camels and the dromedaries shall cover thee*, (these were the means of travel in the prophet's time,) *and the ships of Tarshish shall bring thy sons from afar, &c.* (another mode of travel, where the great western sea—the Mediterranean—affords the opportunity.) But still another mode of conveyance passes before his view in this great panorama of a nation's emigration, not paralleled by any former custom of travelling known to the world ; and as the prophet looks upon it, he exclaims, in the language of surprise: *Who are these that fly as a cloud! and as the doves to their windows;* (or places of rest ;) as if he had said : camels and dromedaries and ships, we know, but what is this? moving like a cloud, stately and swiftly over the face of the waters! Had the prophet a glimpse of our great ocean-steamers, which, when enveloped in their smoke and steam, have very much the appearance of a cloud as it floats along the face of the sky? Another feature he describes, in this new method of

travel: *they fly as doves to their window*—alluding, probably, to that species of the dove which we call the wild pigeon; remarkable for the swiftness of its flight, and moving through the air as if without effort, in prodigious long lines. What figure could be employed more appropriately than this, to express the long rail-road train of cars, and the ease and swiftness with which they fly over the earth?

The Christian prophet gives a full description of these wonderful modes of travel, in the tenth chapter of the Revelations, and I have no doubt they will be chiefly the means by which the Jews will be transported to their own country. If so, this discovery of steam-power has in itself much that is prophetic.

But it is time for us to resume the discourse of our Christian prophet. Having announced the drying up of the Euphrates as an event under the sixth vial, of the greatest moment, because of what was to follow it, he takes a short retrospect of the political state of Christendom, and shows what agents and influences have predominated over the kingdoms of the earth, and the subjection they were under to those influences.

13. *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14. *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

15. ¶ *Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

16. *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

These unclean spirits, as the prophet denominates them, had their origin in three distinct sources. He represents them as coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false

prophet, and by these spirits, acting sometimes singly and at other times conjointly, the kings of the earth, and finally of the whole world, are led, or drawn into measures which ultimately produced their overthrow.

The dragon must be regarded, from the history already quoted, as nothing else but popery in its persecuting character. The beast is the two-horned beast, or popery in the possession, or struggling to maintain the great temporal power which it held for 666 years; and the false prophet will be found in the image of the beast! the most indefatigable teachers and propagators of the false religion, which were ever engaged in the service of popery. They were, also, the most unblushing pretenders to miracle-working, and, taking them all together, the most disagreeable and pertinacious obtruders into state and domestic secrets. They contrived to become the instructors of the noble and wealthy families of Europe, and the confessors of kings and princes, as well as of all the inferior orders of society. It is to this particular relation of intimacy with all classes of men, and all orders of government, which they held, that the prophet refers, when he says they are like frogs!—he means the frogs of Egypt—sent as a judgment upon that land.

In the first place, the frogs of Egypt were exceedingly numerous, they were over all the land, and they were also most disgustingly present, even in the culinary vessels, as well as in the *kneading trough* and the bed-chamber! Their pertinacious obtrusiveness led them into every *secret* place and apartment of domestic life. The resemblance between the three spirits and the frogs, in this respect is very striking. It is found in the intimate knowledge with which the church may possess itself of all domestic and state secrets, by means of auricular confession. This is well known to be a peculiarity of the Church of Rome, by which the priest may learn the most important secrets of state, and have it in his power to defeat the profoundest schemes of diplomatic policy. To what other cause than this can we ascribe

the frequent expulsion of the Jesuits from some of the most powerful governments of Europe? The confessional was more dreaded by many of the crowned heads than insurrection, or an invading army, because the secrets of every cabinet were within its reach; and the words which the king uttered in his bed-chamber to-day might to-morrow be whispered in the confessional! The same may be said of all the domestic relations of life, from the *kneading trough*, or the kitchen, to the *bed-chamber!* In these respects the resemblance between the prying and obtrusive frogs of Egypt and the spirit which came out of the mouth of the false prophet, is striking enough.

I am not discussing the merits of auricular confession. It is a peculiarity of the Church of Rome, which she deems useful to her interests, and I admit that, if used in a strictly religious way, it may be most advantageously employed in promoting spiritual instruction and comfort; but, at the same time, all must be convinced that it lays open to the priesthood all those matters of state policy and domestic interest which the safety of the one and the peace and harmony of the other require should be sacredly private. But let us now look into the manner in which those three unclean spirits exercised so great an influence over the kings of the earth.

The few very brief references that have been made to history on these subjects, have been sufficient to show that the kings or powers of Europe that were in league with Popery have oppressed and persecuted the Christians of the Reformation, at the instigation or by the command of the Pope. Even their own subjects, as in France and Germany, as well as in other countries, have been punished and destroyed in the most barbarous manner by the authority of Rome. The crusades, too, afford a striking exemplification of the force of that influence. These fanatical wars were got up and prosecuted for the purpose of extending the authority of Popery, and by them whole countries were laid waste, and multitudes of people perished by the sword, and by pestilence and

famine. All this came out of the mouth of the *dragon;* it was the spirit of religious bigotry and persecution. But above all, as the means of the most merciless torture, was the *holy office,* or inquisition. This, too, came out of the mouth of the dragon.

Another spirit came out of the mouth of the beast. The prophet refers to the two-horned beast ; he could not refer to the ten-horned beast, inasmuch as he was the chief of the kings that were led and influenced by those spirits.

The two-horned beast, as has been already shown, was the popedom, in its temporal power, or seeking to obtain the great dominion claimed by Gregory VII.,—the 666 years' reign of Popery over the kings of the earth. This exorbitant demand of the popedom was resisted by some of the kingdoms and acquiesced in by others. The consequence of this disagreement was a resort to arms, the almost invariable and indispensable mode of settling disputes between kings in those days. These wars were instigated by the spirit which came out of the mouth of the two-horned beast.

The third source from whence the unclean spirits arose was the great and powerful order of Jesuits, denominated the false prophet. A prophet implies teacher, as well as one who foretells future events. Religious teachers are frequently styled prophets in scripture phrase. The great influence which this order has exerted over the kings of the earth has been referred to before in the brief notices of what history says respecting them. Their superior learning gave them the education of almost all Europe, and by that, as chief amongst the various means which they employed for the purpose, they bound the nations, hand and head, to the throne or authority of Popery ; they imprinted upon the hand and the forehead the indelible mark of submission to the See of Rome. This was all done without the use of arms or any commotion amongst the governments, and in that respect the result looked like the work of a miracle. To the nations that had been accustomed to see great accessions made to the church

by no other means than persecution, in some form or other, this quiet and peaceful method of extending the authority of the Pope, even over countries in a state of semi-barbarism, must have appeared as nothing less than miraculous. But, according to the statements of history, the Jesuits have not failed to resort to what they called miracles, whenever that was found necessary to their success.

Thus, the spirit which came out of the mouth of the false prophet worked miracles before the kings of the earth, and obtained great influence over them.

By these three spirits, acting at different periods upon the governments of Europe, and leading their kings, the world has been kept in a state of war or restless agitation for ages. *They go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.*

Those spirits are congenial to the tastes and dispositions of the rulers of this world, and hence their influence is successfully employed in leading them on to their own destruction. This event has been gradually progressing ever since the Reformation gave freedom of thought and liberty of speech to the people. But there is a more decisive overthrow awaiting these kings than any that has yet been realized. Important changes and concessions have already been made in the old despotic governments of Europe, from the force of impressions made upon the great public mind by the light of the Protestant religion. The people have embraced its light, and have learned better opinions of religion, as well as juster views of their political rights, and they demand the free enjoyment of both. But what remains of the old and sullen despotism of former times, continues to frown upon the liberal sentiments of the present day, and submits itself to the leading of the unclean spirits, until all will be gathered together into a place called, in the Hebrew tongue, *Armageddon.* This Hebrew term signifies a *place* of destruction, and the prophet employs the *name* of the place to signify the thing itself. These spirits led the kings of the

earth and of the whole world until they were entirely overthrown or destroyed.

The destruction alluded to will be brought about by the superior knowledge the people will derive from the principles and teachings of the Protestant religion. They will learn what are the just rights of men as subjects of government, and that religious freedom is the birth-right of all men. Under this improved and enlightened state of the human mind, men will be no longer deluded by false miracles and corrupt doctrines; their faith will be in God and his word, and not in the pompous ceremonies and the imposing pretensions of fallible, and frequently, very corrupt men.

Under these nobler views of religion and civil government, what could be expected but that the old institutions of bigotry and superstition, and the thrones of despotic governments should be doomed to destruction—should find themselves in Armageddon! All such clusters of human ignorance and cruelty will be thrown into the wine-press of the wrath of God, and will be trodden down by the light and power of the Christian religion.

This is the *battle* of that great day of God Almighty, spoken of in the fourteenth verse. It is the battle of the pure Christian religion waging an exterminating war against all systems of false religion devised by men; and it is the battle of rational and enlightened liberty against the existence of despotic governments.

The warning contained in the fifteenth verse is given to the nations that walk in the light, and it is intended to put them on their guard against any relaxation of their effort or vigilence, as they know not the means which these unclean spirits will employ against them. It amounts to this: that the Protestant powers are not to relax their efforts to spread the true gospel religion, and suffer themselves to be lulled into supineness by the altered tone and conciliatory manner of their old adversary. They are not to allow the enemy, although he presents himself in a subdued manner, to enter

their camp and have the freest access to all their defences, lest he may deceive and overcome them.

Keeping one's garments about him, implies that the man is on his guard, and will not be surprised by the insidious measures of his foe, and thereby expose himself to the ridicule of others.

The garment is the covering and defence of the body, and is used here as a metaphor to signify the faith, prayer and works of righteousness, which are the strength of the church, without these, the shame of her nakedness would appear.

### THE SEVENTH VIAL.

17. *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.*

18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men came upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*

19 *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

20. *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found*

21. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plagues of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

This vial differs from all the others, in this respect, it is poured out *into the air*. We are to infer from this, that its effects will be universal, and for the most part incomprehensible in their origin, and various as to the portions of the earth, or countries that will be affected by them. When I say they will be universal, I mean not that they will exist in

all parts of the earth at one time, but that they will be experienced in different portions of the earth at different times. Two peculiarities are suggested by the text: first the *diffusiveness* of this vial; and, secondly, the *mysterious* nature of its operation.

Of the air, or atmosphere that surrounds the earth we know nothing, but by its effects. *We hear the sound thereof but cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth.* When the unchained tempest roars against the mountain and uproots its sturdiest trees; or sweeps over the sea, scattering whole navies before it; man hides himself, and trembles in the consciousness of his own weakness. These storms frequently break out suddenly, and rage with great violence within a limited space, while the sea and the land in all other directions, are perfectly calm. We cannot see the wind, we can only feel it in its effects.

It is a universal and mysterious element which gives no account of itself to man, and disdains his authority.

The prophet groups under several distinct heads, the different forms in which the plagues of this vial will appear. There were voices, and thunder, and lightnings—these are the standing metaphors of disorder and political commotion all through the Apocalypse, and they will continue under the seventh vial, with effects exceeding any other age of the world.

A great earthquake will be another prominent feature of that time; of a character so mighty, so extraordinary, as had never been known since men were upon the earth. As a grand effect of this earthquake, the great city was divided *into three parts*, and the cities of the nations fell.

Both in the Jewish and the Christian Scripture, the church is spoken of under the metaphor of a city; and I do not know that the same figure is anywhere employed to express civil government. In the eleventh chapter, eighth verse, there is a great city spoken of, in the streets of which that notable outrage was committed upon the two witnesses.

The spirit of that great city was therefore hostile to the gospel of Christ, although it was a church calling itself Christian. See the remarks on the eleventh chapter.

The true character of these great cities spoken of, is to be learned from the circumstances with which they stand connected.

In the case of the one now before us, there is nothing said of it to lead us to suppose it is the same as the one spoken of in the eleventh chapter. The prophet says of it simply, that the great city was divided into three parts. It will be proper just to remark here, that the term great, when applied to these cities, implies the extensive and powerful influence they exert in the world. During the ages before the Reformation, and for some time after it proclaimed a free gospel to all mankind, the Romish Church, in the sense above mentioned, was the great city. But, from the prevalence and influence which will distinguish Protestantism in the days of this seventh vial, the term, great city, will become more appropriate to that religion.

It seems reasonable to suppose, that the term city, is not intended to comprehend all portions of Protestant Christendom, from the fact that it is immediately said, after speaking of the great city: *and the cities of the nations fell.* The great city then is a term of distinction, showing that what is spoken of is not a single, isolated body of Christians, but a whole nation, whose government is founded upon the doctrines and morality of the gospel; whose laws recognise as its fundamental principles—the laws of God. Such a nation is a *great city!* its influence will be felt in distant nations by means of those efforts of Christian benevolence which it will make to carry the blessings of the gospel to the people of all lands. There are two such great cities now in the world—England and the United States of America. But which of the two will be the great city that will be divided into three parts, time and the event itself only can tell.

The earthquake under this vial is unlike the earthquake

of the eleventh chapter. That earthquake was attended with elements of terror ; thousands are represented as slain by it, and the remnant as being greatly affrighted. I am aware that this language is figurative, but it suggests the idea of consternation. Not so in the present case. Here is an earthquake it is true, but that in prophetic language signifies nothing more than some great change in the civil government of a country—and the earthquake is great, or otherwise, according to the consequences produced by this change.

There are no appearances of terror—no shocks of overwhelming ruin attending this earthquake ; a change passes over the nation, and it is divided into three parts. The prophet makes no further use of it than merely to mention it as one of the remarkable events of the seventh vial—that when it occurs it will stand for a sign of the last days.

All that can be said as to the manner of dividing the great city into three parts, can amount to nothing more than conjecture. No certainty can be reached in a matter that is yet in the future ; but looking upon what has passed over the world in the way of great changes in the policy and government of nations, and the comparative quietness and ease with which old and arbitrary forms and principles are laid aside, and new and more appropriate ones take their place ; we may suppose that the great city will be divided into three parts, without the violence and bloodshed that formerly attended every change in a government. Some political disagreement—some sectional or local interest—real or imaginary, may lead to discord, and grow into dissension which cannot be healed. One section of the great city may take an independent attitude ; and, moved by the example of this one, another portion, having a different interest may do the same, until there will be three governments, each independent of the other, where there was formerly but one ; but all continuing to maintain the same religious principles—the same gospel morality, and the same Christian benevolence, which distinguished the great city when

it was but one. The change will be political. But there is such a strength of Christian principle, and such a strong influence of gospel morality amongst the people, that every change in civil government will have to bow before truth and righteousness—will have to acknowledge kindness and good will amongst men, as the true basis of government.

The cities of the nations fell. This is another peculiarity of the seventh vial age. No one can say how long this age will last, whether one, two, or three hundred years, or even to a period beyond this; but within this time, all sectarian distinctions amongst Christians will cease—all bigotry and jealousy, which will now sometimes arise, and too frequently separate and estrange Christian communities from each other, will then be banished, and all the different forms and ceremonies of church service—the mere wood, hay and stubble of men's different opinions will exist no longer. The light of that age will enable Christians to see eye to eye; there will be no dissentions where all see alike. The great temple spoken of (15 chap.: 5,) will fill the Christian world in that day.

Those sectarian differences amongst Christians, which now exist, are not spoken of by the prophet as subjects of the divine displeasure. In fact, they are unavoidable—if, indeed, they are not indispensible; because, the temper and disposition of men's minds are so various, that diversity of opinions relative to church government and forms of divine worship must be unavoidable; but when all are moved by a proper zeal, much more success will attend the efforts to spread the gospel, than any one form of church government and worship would be likely to have. The world has seen this demonstrated since the Reformation. When the world was under the *one church* power, religion became a despotism, and the fear of God was entirely lost in the paramount fear of the authorities of the church! But the several members, or branches of the Christian Church, which have sprung up from a free, Protestant, religion, have provoked each other

to love and to good works ; they have stimulated each other to acts of Christian benevolence ; and, by this holy strife, they have given the gospel to all lands, where Christian access was at all possible.

The seventh vial age will not witness these exertions ; it will be the half hour's silence in heaven. The gospel day then has passed, and these cities of the nations, these different churches, will fall, and become merged in the great one temple filled with the glory of God.

The next striking feature of that age is great Babylon, just now brought under the power of the divine displeasure. There is a peculiarity in the manner of the prophet's expression just here. He says : *And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.* This mode of expression implies that the power alluded to had its seat in some distant place, quite ouside of the sphere in which the great events revolved that have hitherto occupied the attention of the prophet. This Babylon was not within the temple of God and the altar that were measured by direction of the angel, (chap. xi.,) but had its seat in the court which was without, and which was given to the Gentiles ; and the manner of noticing it now signifies that it had been overlooked or disregarded in the previous dispensations of the divine justice—its time had not yet come.

This great Babylon is, without doubt, the vast Moslem hierarchy—the Turkish religion.

In order to force the Koran upon the world, the Turk has employed his power with characteristic cruelty, and has equalled, in the treatment of his Christian captives, the greatest barbarities which ancient Babylon ever inflicted upon the Jews.

Upon the great calendar, where nations and empires are set down for divine adjudication, the case of Mohammedanism is now reached, and the cup of the wine of the fierceness of God's wrath is given unto her.

The sixth vial was poured out upon this power, but its effects were political. Under the seventh vial the Mohammedan religion is struck, and then this dark, sullen, and ferocious delusion will come to an end. The glory of God and the happiness of man equally require that it should come to an end.

Mohammedanism is so distant from the morality of the gospel, and its principles so repugnant to Christianity and so debasing to the human mind, that no Christian effort has ever been able to approach it. It has ever been invulnerable at every point to the light of the gospel. This monstrous system of religion, the compound of cruelty and sensuality, throws its mountain form directly across the highway of the Christian religion ; and while the nations around it are casting off their old systems and springing into new life and vigor, this Moslem power remains as unexcited and as insensible to the stirring scenes of the age, as if it were a dead carcass. There it lies, unmoved and shrouded in the hideous and impenetrable gloom of its own fatalism.

Having disposed of the errors and overthrown the impure systems which had grown up in Christendom, the Almighty now stretches forth his hand and shakes down this great mountain, and puts an end to this Mahometan Babylon.

The complete extirpation of Mohammedanism from the earth is expressed in the figurative language of the twentieth verse : *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

These cumbersome and coarse metaphors are employed as suitable to that sensual and degraded religion. But another Babylon, another system of religion, is to be overthrown, which, as we shall presently see, is illustrated by metaphors of an intellectual kind.

The last providential act which occurs under the seventh vial judgment is named in the last verse of the chapter : *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, &c.* This hail, whatever it may import, will be conspicuous amongst the

events of the seventh trumpet age, and will be, perhaps, the most fearful of all the judgments of that judgment-day.

Hitherto the chastisements of heaven upon the nations have been produced chiefly by wars and famines ; but these will cease, and will no longer be known in the earth. The prevalence of Christianity—of course I speak of a Christianity which has God in it—will put an end to wars, an event referred to by the Psalmist in the forty-sixth psalm :

9. *He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth ; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder ; he burneth the chariot in the fire.*

10. *Be still, and know that I am God ; I will be exalted among the heathen ; I will be exalted in the earth.*

The peculiar language of these two verses of the psalm apply with striking fitness to this unique visitation. The vial form in which it came was poured out into the air, implying that the visitation would be diffusive, extending generally throughout the earth. And God, in the prophetic words of the Psalmist, is represented as saying, to the ordinary means of judgments upon men, *stand still ;* retire, or give place to my voice, which I will cause to be heard ; not in Christendom alone, but in all the earth—not amongst the nations only that have heard my gospel, but the heathen shall also know, by means of this last visitation, that *I am God, and my name shall be exalted in all the earth*—far and wide, as the air which extends over all the earth, so shall this last visitation extend to all people and lands.

Famine, as well as wars, will cease to afflict the earth. This also will be a consequence of the influence of Christianity. Under its enlightening power, all the great improvements which are beneficial to man and conduce to his happiness have their origin. Increased knowledge in the arts of husbandry, and the vast extent of agriculture, under a state of universal peace, will fill every land with abundance ; and if any part of the earth should happen to fail in its supplies, the telegraph will instantly send the cry of want into other coun-

tries, and the great steamers and the swift lines of railroad trains will promptly supply the want ; so that famine can hardly be contemplated as a possibility in the greatly improved state of agriculture, and the rapidity with which supplies can be thrown from one country into another.

What is to be the rod of this judgment in the last dispensation ? The prophet speaks of it as a great hail falling upon men out of heaven. His language is metaphorical, and is intended to represent the existence of some great evil acting upon men with fearful effect—exciting the most intense anxiety and dread. And yet, like the air, it is unseen, uncontrollable, and mysterious; known in all lands, but equally inexplicable to all people.

To answer the question, what is it—what is implied by this great and ponderous hail ? I should say that there is nothing of an effective providential character known to the world so likely to be this rod, as the *Asiatic cholera*. Probably the Psalmist, speaking as a prophet, for he was not speaking of his own times, referred to this very extraordinary disease, which he appropriately denominated *the pestilence that walketh in darkness*—a most forcible illustration of a disease that wraps itself in mystery, and in the midst of noon-day light of medical science eludes and confounds the most keen-sighted and penetrating researches of medical genius. Nothing answers to the fall of the great and ponderous hail so suitably as this dire and incomprehensible disease. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent ; and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail ; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

The blasphemy spoken of in the text is not to be taken in the common acceptation of that term ; but what it means here is, that men ascribed to some inferior agency that which was the direct appointment of God. This pestilence, although so mysterious and inexplicable upon any known laws of disease, men still attempted to account for and explain upon natural causes—thus defeating the ends or purposes of this

judgment by taking it out of the hand of God, and making it a natural or common-place occurrence. Notwithstanding the plague of this hail was *exceeding great*—meaning the whole character of this pestilence, its origin and its operation, was strange and wonderful beyond anything known in the order of diseases, and might well entitle it to be regarded as a judgment from God.

The seventh vial was poured out into the air, and this hail fell out of heaven, the common expression for the atmosphere above and around us.

The cholera has its home in the air, and, like the air, we hear the sound of it, but cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. We feel and behold the effects of the cholera in its death-ravages, but we know nothing else of it. When it suddenly falls upon a whole city and hurries away a part of its population, who has ever been able to tell where it came from? And when it sheathes its destroying sword and departs, who will tell us whither it goeth? It steps from continent to continent, and from one country to another, and all that we know of it when it makes these gigantic strides is its foot-prints of death which it leaves behind it. At one time it fills the city with death and lamentation, at another it points its death-finger at the quiet cottage, and some of its inmates fall. The mountain-top and the healthful vale afford no security from its ravages. It travels in the crowded steamboats, and makes the solitary river-banks populous with its dead. It strikes its death-blow even in the railroad-car while on its rapid flight. It seizes upon one island in the sea and almost depopulates it, while neighboring islands feel nothing of its effects. It lays its hand of death upon the crowded and busy emporium, and the thronged streets are hushed to silence. Men forsake their occupations and their wealth and fly for their lives, while a neighboring city is untouched by it.

Nor does the cholera pay any more respect to climate or season than it does to healthy or unhealthy localities.

If we trust to the purifying frosts of winter to shield us from its grasp—behold! we hear the wail of cholera-death mingling with the storms of sleet and snow. If the balmy breath of summer promises us health and safety from it, alas! the cholera is found concealed in our most delicious fruits. No place, no circumstance, no condition exempts us from it; the sea and the land, the crowded city and the open country, wealth and poverty, are all alike subject to, and have been visited by this most mysterious and inscrutable pestilence.

Is not this precisely what our Lord means, in that memorable conversation with the Pharisees, when they demanded of him when the kingdom of God should come? After giving them many of the circumstances and signs which will precede, or attend the advent of that kingdom, he speaks in this wise: *I tell you in that night*—Christ had spoken of the night that cometh when no man can see to work—*In that day there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left.*

What can this mean, if it does not refer to this singular and mysterious pestilence? Here are three conditions, which may represent the different states into which human society is divided. First, here is the bed—signifying a state of ease, comfort, and affluence. Secondly, the grinding at the mill is the laboring classes, who work within doors, or free from exposure to the vicissitudes of the weather; and, lastly, the class that performs the laborious service of husbandry; they are upon the open fields, exposed to the heat of summer and the cold of winter. And in those three classes or conditions of men, the agent, or influence, our Savior referred to, made no distinction; and yet, in each of those conditions it makes a marked personal discrimination. Persons situated precisely alike, are strangely separated; one part is cut down, the other is untouched! This accords strictly with the mysterious cause of the cholera.

But some will ask, was not Christ speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, when he used the language above quoted? Whoever thinks so, let him apply these sayings to that event, and if he can discover any meaning in them under such an application, let him do so.

The Pharisees were very solicitous to learn where this most surprising event should take place; but our Savior made it his business to impart instruction rather than to gratify curiosity, and knowing that these events did not apply to their age, (though they may to our age,) he simply answered: *Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.* He does not mean any particular place by this answer, he means to say these things will *certainly* come to pass. As certainly as the eagles from their lofty flight discern their prey, and rush from the clouds to seize upon it, just so certainly will these things that I have spoken to you come to pass in their appointed time; they will not fail any more than the prey of the eagle fails to fall under the keen, penetrating, far-reaching eye of that bird. But to return from our digression.

With what a mockery does the cholera treat the science of medicine? How it spurns the laws which govern and give identity to all other diseases! How strange are its movements, and how it changes its form and features without changing its fearful power. Indeed, so relenting does it appear at times, that the man of medicine fancies he has succeeded in binding this Sampson of pestilence—that he has found out a remedy; and indulges a strong hope that he will recover the patient; but when he calls again, he finds his bands, with which he hoped he had securely bound the strong foe, broken and shattered like shreds of tow, and he is confounded in beholding the minister of death standing before him in a form in which he had never seen him before.

If the Almighty should commission this destroyer of men to empty the land which he had given to Abraham and his seed for a possession for ever; how short would be the work?

how soon would the avenues of their cities be choked with the dead, and the fields be strewed with the dying! In short, how soon would the whole country present just such a scene as that which is described in the thirty-ninth chapter of Ezekiel.

The history of Sennacherib's army records a frightful instance of the terrible effects of this angel of death.

The Assyrian came up in all the pomp and pride of a mighty conqueror, to tread down Jerusalem. His heralds proclaimed his approach, and in his name demanded the surrender of the city. He scorned the God in whom the people trusted, and boastfully asked, what gods had been able to save other countries from his victorious arms?

The good Hezekiah, then upon the throne of Judea, pleaded with God for help against this powerful and presumptuous adversary. By the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, God assured the king, that the Assyrian should not come into the city, nor should he shoot an arrow there; but should be driven back by the way that he came.

Hezekiah was not left in long suspense as to the issue; that very night the angel of death smote the Assyrian, and the next morning beheld one hundred and eighty-five thousand corpses scattered throughout the camp.

This angel of death, doubtless, was what is now called the Asiatic cholera. The dreadful scene of mortality produced in Sennacherib's army in one night, resembles very much the ravages of the cholera in Asia, and Europe, and our own country, within the last few years—sudden in its attack, and quick in its work of death.

It is no argument against this view of the providential use of the cholera, to say, that it is not a *new* infliction or calamity upon men—that it is as old as Sennacherib's army, and that its very name, "Asiatic cholera," denotes that it has long been known in the earth.

All this is admitted. But what this explanation, of at least one striking peculiarity of the seventh vial, contends for is,

that this is one of the principal, and perhaps the most remarkable one, of the mysterious means of chastising nations, *adopted* as a *substitute* for those which have passed away.

The cholera may have been known ages ago, but has never before, perhaps, been taken up by Providence as a means of general national chastisement. It is an old visitation, now applied to new purposes—an old rod hitherto used only in remote and secluded portions of the earth, but is now brought out and employed by the Almighty to chastise the obstinacy and rebellion of the people. Nor does it at all conflict with this view of the subject to say that the righteous also fall by this pestilence. What judgment of God ever visited any nation that the righteous did not fall, more or less? As human society now exists, the righteous unavoidably participate, to some extent, in the evil brought upon the world by the ungodly, whether it be war, or famine, or pestilence. But they do not suffer as enemies of God, but as his children, whose afflictions are sanctified to their good, whether they live or die.

When the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air, a great voice out of the *temple of heaven, from the throne*, made this solemn enunciation : *It is done!* Imagination can add nothing to the grandeur and solemnity of this announcement. It is the unalterable and eternal decree of Jehovah himself, proclaiming through the temple—that is, his church—that all that is earthly, all the institutions and systems, powers and principalities, hitherto known and familiar with men, will fade away from the earth, will disappear and be no more known when the effects of this vial have been completed. The united voice of the whole Church of Christ, which once, while the gospel day lasted, called men to repentance, and implored them to receive the proffered mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, now, upon the authority of God—that is, the voice from the throne—proclaims the day of grace is passed, the summer of mercy is ended, the work of salvation has ceased—*it is done.* A word more upon the last plague.

Numerous instances are upon record of sudden visitations of the Divine judgments upon a community or a country—such as the case of Sodom and Gomorrah of Egypt, and the history of the Israelites, and afterwards of the Jewish nation. But in all these cases the visitation was for a local or present purpose, to punish for social or national sins. But we are to suppose that the latter day, or judgment-day judgments, if I may so call them, by way of distinction, which will reach over all the earth and abide amongst all nations, will not come in that sudden manner, but will appear, and then disappear again, like the clouds, which for awhile obscure the face of the sun, then disappear, and all is bright again as before. Then they will rise again, and again disappear ; but finally the whole sky is overcast, and the destroying tempest howls over the land and the sea.

The cholera arose in some remote part of Asia, and ravaged awfully as it coursed its way over than continent, then threw itself upon Europe. The people of Europe trembled and bowed before the dreadful scourge, and thousands were its victims. It left Europe, and, riding upon the winds, it crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and smote the cities and smaller towns of America ; not all at once, but one after another, observing generally, as a rule, not to attack two cities at the same time. This was one of the extraordinary peculiarities of the cholera when it first appeared in this country. Its second visitation was not marked so strictly by the observance of this rule. But it still walks in darkness—still maintains its mysterious and inscrutable character; shakes its fearful rod, first over one nation, then over another; throws one city into grief, and then appears in another, in quite a different part of the country. But when the day of judgment is come—when the voice out of the throne, *it is done,* shall be heard, then this rod of God's anger will be laid upon the whole earth at once—will be as universal as the air, and, like the great hail, it will fill the earth at one time with an *exceeding great plague.*

Such, no doubt, was the manner in which the flood approached. Men were duly notified of it. Noah was warning the people and building the ark one hundred and twenty years. During this time, we may suppose that the earth gave frequent signs of the approach of that event: but when these subsided, the fears of the people subsided too. But the time came at last, of which Noah had warned them, and a universal deluge engulphed the earth.

The seals discontinue their developments by the *half hour's silence in heaven*, when the gospel-day closes. The trumpets extend their announcement of great changes in the religious and civil government of the world, and conclude with the opening of the temple of God in heaven, in which was seen the ark of *his testament*, signifying that the *law of God* will then become the great governing principle amongst the kingdoms of the earth. The changes which will produce this wonderful revolution in the kingdoms of this world are expressed in the language of the concluding verse of the eleventh chapter: *And there were lightnings, and voices, and thundering, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

The vials close the Revelations, or the Divine Dispensations, in the form of judgments; with the universal effects of those judgments, exhibited under the metaphor of great hail, corresponding with the closing scene of the trumpets.

Having brought all these revelations down to their close, the prophet now goes back, to exhibit and explain other things which had passed under his eye in the great drama of revelation.

The first subject which he takes up for exhibition is the corrupt connection of the Church with the kingdoms of this world; showing the great authority she had exercised over them, and the moral effects produced upon each other by this connection.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE WOMAN SITTING UPON THE SCARLET-COLORED BEAST.

1. *And there came one of seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither; I will shew unto you the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters;*

2. *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

3. *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*

4. *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications.*

5. *And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth.*

6. *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

One of the seven angels which had the seven vials, became the instructor of the prophet in this vision. *Come, follow me, I will show you*, or make you acquainted, with the moral character of this corrupt woman that sitteth upon many waters: that is, she exercises a controlling power and authority over

*peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.* (See the fifteenth verse).

The kings of the earth first corrupted the church. She was led into a spirit of worldly ambition by the flattery and gifts bestowed by kingly power, until she at length claimed the right of exercising power over thrones and dominions! The spirit and principles of Christianity were prostituted to the lust of power and worldly aggrandizement.

This corrupt influence had the natural effect of demoralizing the people. All sense of spirituality, and even morality was lost, and they became like people in a state of intoxication—bewildered, stupid, and incapable of distinguishing one thing from another : thus, the angel says : *the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk by the wine of her fornications.* Nothing but the stupor of a moral intoxication could have induced the people to buy as greedily as they did, the Pope's indulgences ; and to yield themselves the easy dupes of the pious frauds and impositions practiced upon them in that day of ignorance, by their spiritual teachers.

The prophet was carried away in the spirit into the wilderness ; where he saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

This beast is the German Empire upholding the authority of the Papal Church. The wilderness is the place where this woman is seen. The reader will recollect that the woman, of a very different character from this one, which the prophet described, clothed with the sun and having the moon under her feet, was in the wilderness, also ; she fled into the wilderness for protection. The wilderness in both cases is civil government. The woman on the scarlet-colored beast, rides upon it, impels and controls it, for the purpose of destroying the saints ; while the first woman fled to the wilderness, that is, took shelter under the authority of civil power for safety, not to use it as the means of violence and persecution.

The time of this vision is ascertained by the description of the beast. The seven heads and ten horns have been described in the thirteenth chapter, and they are the seven electorates by whom the German emperors were elected ; and the ten horns are those powers or sovereignties that composed the empire. It is further said of this beast that it was full of names of blasphemy. These were the acts and decrees of the different diets and councils, and titles used by the emperors, particularly Charles V., in his struggle against the Reformation. All the peculiarities of this beast distinguish the German empire during that period, and after it.

The woman is represented as sitting *upon* the beast. The Church was upheld by this empire—the great sword of civil power, in opposing the Reformation, was employed under the direction of the woman. The scarlet color of the beast expresses its resemblance in its power and temper to the old dragon empire of Rome. And the woman was arrayed in colors which liken her to the imperial authority of Rome in its ferocious persecution of the Christians.

Besides the purple and scarlet colors in which the woman was arrayed, the prophet says she was *decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.* These are ornaments usually worn for the purpose of striking the eye of the beholder, and exciting wonder and admiration; they are no part of the clothing ; they are not worn for comfort, but to produce an effect upon those who look upon them. In this view these ornaments in which the woman was decked most singularly accord with the worship of the church she represents. It is all outward show, and frequently very gay and pompous, calculated to strike the senses, and through them to affect the mind.

The gorgeous cathedrals and sumptuous churches, decked with costly and glowing drapery, and pictures, with vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and the imposing ceremonials of their worship, are all designed to strike the outward sense, and raise the admiration of men, but do not produce

any moral effect, or impart any spiritual comfort. If, as some suppose, these costly ornaments express the wealth of the Church of Rome, they are well adapted to that purpose also.

The riches which were accumulated by the sale of indulgences only, about the time the Reformation commenced, were almost incalculable ; but besides this, the kingdoms of all Christendom were laid under contribution to the coffers of the church.

The woman had in her *hand a golden cup, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.*

This golden cup fitly represents Christianity in its outward institution. Its legitimate contents are the purifying operations of the Holy Spirit—the grace which strengthens the hope and faith of men, and generally all the blessings of the gospel of Christ.

This cup in the hand of the woman represents her as professing the Christian religion—claiming to be *the Christian Church.* But instead of the blessings of the gospel which we look for in the Christian cup, this cup in the woman's hand was filled with the *abominations and filthiness of her fornication*—that is, under the name and profession of a Christian Church, her doctrines and teachings have a demoralizing effect ; the inhabitants of the earth are made drunk by the wine with which she has filled this cup ; they are brought under a moral stupor and intoxication.

The religion of Europe before the Reformation, as well as since that time, in those countries which have rejected its light, fully corroborates what is here said of the effects of the contents of this woman's cup.

Very decided tokens of the woman's character are given in what the prophet saw written upon her forehead : *And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.*

These give the character of this woman in the age referred to by the prophet, when she sat upon the scarlet-colored

beast ; and, taken all together, they are called a *name* which signifies her *history*, which comprises these various characteristics. The first trait named is "MYSTERY !"

When we revert to the early purity and self-denying spirit of the church, and especially to the patience, fortitude, and resignation, with which she endured the violent persecution of Pagan Rome, giving up her life rather than part with her faith in Christ, and now behold her inflicting the same tortures and death upon those who profess the same faith, the term *mystery* is distinctly applicable. It is, indeed, most mysterious, that a church which once willingly suffered death for her religion, should now punish with death the people who profess the *same* religion, while she at the same time claims to be the Church of Christ on earth—the oldest and the only true apostolic church. Beyond a doubt, she is a *mystery*.

The next title is, *Babylon the Great*, by which she is distinguished for all those acts of ferocious persecution that are so fearfully conspicuous in her history. The blood of the Waldenses and Albigenses, the fires of Smithfield, the tortures of the inquisition, the purposes of the Spanish Armada, the slaughter of the Saint Bartholomew, the cruelties inflicted upon the Huguenots—all these, with her whole system of cruel and vexatious opposition and hindrance to the progress of the Protestant religion, liken her to great Babylon, that ferocious power of old, which destroyed the people of God under the Jewish dispensation, and whose memories of despotic oppression remain, and give name and distinction to the acts of cruelty and blood perpetrated upon Christians by a Christian Church.

The last title is, *the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*. Amongst this progeny of the woman may be seen the secret and open infidelity and atheism with which Europe, and particularly France, has been corrupted. The desecration and total disregard of the Sabbath, and the train of vices and immoralities to which the contempt of that sa-

cred institution leads, are the prevailing habits of the people in all countries which lie under the dominion of this woman. Corrupt morals, vitiated religious tastes, debauchery and blasphemy, are the common and tolerated indulgences of this mother of abominations, and illustrate the forcible figure used by the prophet, *the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

It is strange that Protestant divines should claim descent from this woman. If any such connection does exist, it would be more discreet to conceal it than to boast of it.

The prophet closes his description with saying: *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her I wondered with great admiration.*

In this remarkable picture the prophet describes a particular period in the civil and ecclesiastical history of Europe. I shall now proceed to show when that period existed.

We cannot go further back for its origin than the fourteenth century. It was in 1356 when the empire assumed the peculiar form of the seven-headed beast. It was then that the number of electors was fixed by the "Golden Bull," at seven.

These electors, by their vote, conferred the empire—their voice elected the emperor. The ten horns, or the ten sovereignties, existed as so many portions of the empire long before the institution of the seven electorates. This was the political constitution of the German empire in the time of the Reformation.

We will now look at the ecclesiastical history of these times, as referred to in the character of the woman who was seated on the scarlet-colored beast, or the Papal Church acting upon and directing the powers of the empire.

The persecutions with which the dragon attempted to destroy the first symptoms of the Reformation, as heard in the cry of the souls the prophet saw under the altar, when the fifth seal was opened, began at an earlier date. The sword of persecution in France had slain these earliest reformers, and

the Inquisition followed to gather up all that had escaped the sword. Its profoundly secret movements—its thousand spies and informers, made it almost impossible for any one to speak a word against the errors and corruptions of the Romish Church without being brought under its tortures.

But when the Reformation proper, lifted up its voice in Germany, then the fury of the woman was seen, in the efforts of cruelty which she was constantly making to extinguish its light and arrest its progress.

In view of the general character of the persecutions against Protestants by Popery, the prophet says: *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the martyrs of Jesus.*

The prophet, I think, is referring, when he speaks of the woman being drunk, to the suicidal madness and stupidity with which this persecution was conducted. Men who attempt to commit any acts of violence against others, while in a state of drunkenness, often inflict greater injury upon themselves than upon those they assail. In their senseless fury, they do themselves greater injury than those they design to harm. Let us take France as an illustration. No part of the population of France was more orderly, peaceable and useful to the nation, than the Albigenses and the Waldenses, and yet, these were the very people who, by the direction of the woman, were hunted down and destroyed like wild beasts. The massacre of the St. Bartholomew swept off thousands of the most patriotic, noble and distinguished of her citizens—the very chivalry of the country; and, finally, the banishment of the Huguenots, under Louis XIV., deprived his kingdom of the most ingenious, industrious and orderly portion of his subjects, who, carrying with them their invaluable skill and industry into other countries, became the means of raising up rival interests to France, who, previous to this act of perfidy and cruelty, had enjoyed the exclusive benefit of their skill and industry in the particular kind of manufactures in which they excelled, as well as the example

of their upright and religious deportment. But, they were Protestants! and were, therefore, proper subjects for the persecuting and destroying policy of the woman, no matter at what costs to the national interests. Such acts of folly and madness are resembled by the prophet to the effects of drunkenness.

The authority of the Church of Rome was upheld in Europe chiefly by the military power of the German empire; and many of the desolating wars in which the empire was frequently engaged, were for the maintenance of her power over those kingdoms and countries which had partially or entirely embraced the Protestant cause. Although the empire was the strong arm of her defence, and the principal seat of her strength, there were separate kingdoms which gave her the support of the sword. Amongst these, France was conspicuous; and whenever the strife was exclusively for the defence of Popery, "The Great Sword," which was consecrated to that service, in the coronation oath of Charlemagne, was wielded with tremendous destruction.

France never used the sword in vindication of the Protestant religion. It is true that she joined Sweden in the war between the empire and Gustavus Adolphus, when he took the field to defend the rights of Protestants in Germany. But Richelieu avowed his motive to be, not the aid of the Protestants, but by incidentally aiding their side of the struggle, he might be able to effect a higher object, which was to humble the house of Austria.

The complete body and form of this vision we may consider as having had a full development in that period of European history which began with the reign of Charles V. of Germany, and ended when Buonaparte exploded the German empire, and used its materials in the construction of the French empire; which, for military power and splendor, combined with imperial grandeur and magnificence, never had an equal in the world!

But the woman did not sit upon *this* beast. Napoleon

never employed his sword in propagating or upholding ecclesiastical power. He had no religious wars. The thunder of the Vatican, which shook the thrones of Europe, was struck dumb in his presence, and Popery, in its political form, shared the same fate that was experienced by the other powers, from his bold and triumphant strides over continental Europe.

In concluding this vision of the woman, the prophet says: *And when I saw her I wondered with great admiration.* And well he might wonder and be astonished, when he recollected what this woman was in her infancy. He well remembered the zeal of Paul, and Peter, and James, and many others with whom he was associated in the holy labor of building up the church upon the true gospel foundation. He called to mind her vigorous growth, her piety and godly bearing before men; how she rebuked the worldly-minded, and instructed and comforted all who came to her light. When he reverted to the holy exhortations and affectionate counsels which he addressed to her in her youthful state—*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not*; and in her more advanced age, when she became the mother of children in the various parts of the Roman Empire, he addressed her, in the language of his Second Epistle, *the elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth*,—when all those scenes of the early purity and loveliness of the woman came fresh upon his mind, and he contrasted them with her condition now presented to him by the angel—when, instead of the chaste and lovely elect lady whom he loved in the truth, he now beheld her a fallen, profligate woman, absorbed in worldly aggrandizement, and shedding the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, he might well be overwhelmed with astonishment and wonder.

The angel next proceeds to give explanations on the political character of the governments of Europe as they were connected with the history of the woman in executing her

vengeance upon her opposers, and finally in overthrowing the woman herself.

He first refers to the political change which had passed upon the beast that the prophet saw arise out of the *sea*. The historical sketch which the angel gives reaches from the days of Charlemagne, when he established his great empire over Europe, down to the overthrow of the Napoleon dynasty in 1816.

I shall notice this sketch very briefly, as much of it as has been referred to in the remarks upon previous chapters.

The principal object of these explanations seems to be to fix in the minds of men the truthfulness of these prophecies, and thereby establish the authenticity of the Christian Scriptures; for in this Book of Revelation we are told that prophecy is, in all ages of the church, to be regarded as *the testimony of Jesus.*

7. *And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.*

8. *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

9. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*

10. *And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*

11. *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.*

12. *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.*

13. *These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

14. *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

15. *And he said unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

16. *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*

17. *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdoms unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

18. *And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

The first thing the angel tells the prophet, by way of explanation, is, that the beast which he saw *was, and is not*; does not *now* exist in the political character which it bore when he saw it rise out of the sea. But it will appear again in that same character, and it shall ascend out of the bottomless pit. Here is the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*. The vision of the woman seated upon the scarlet-colored beast, we learn from this explanation, referred to a period subsequent to the reign of the French monarchs over the empire which Charlemagne had established, and precedent to the French Revolution—the bottomless pit, out of which the power arose that restored the beast to his first political character, and put him again under French sovereignty. This is simply a fact in the political history of Europe, having no immediate connection with the church. The empire is considered to have taken its decided Germanic character under Otho the Great in the tenth century, having been previously governed by a French monarch, Charlemagne and his descendants. The beast *was* a great French monarchy, until it passed to the Germans, then the period existed when the angel says, *it is not*; and, referring to a time future to the vision then before them, he says it shall be again, and shall

ascend out of the bottomless pit ; so that the German Empire was the scarlet-colored beast upon which the woman sat, and came in between the first and the last stage of the beast first seen. True, the angel says—*and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is!* It would be an egregious error to suppose that the angel meant to say, that the beast *was*, and *was not*, *did*, and *did not* exist at the same time. In every way and in every sense this would be an utter impossibility. What he means to say is, that they who shall dwell upon the earth when the beast *will be again*, after he has ascended out of the bottomless pit, will wonder and be astonished at what he will do.

This second appearance of the beast, or, it may be said, the restoration of the old Charlemagnic Empire, was the *French Empire*, whose grandeur was created by, and whose power and spirit were the inspirations of, the genius of Napoleon.

It can hardly be necessary to say of an historic event of such recent occurrence, that the wonderful achievements he accomplished in his military triumphs, and the great changes he produced, with electrical celerity, in the politics and governments of Europe, struck the world with amazement and awe, and shook Europe, particularly, with a consternation that it had never felt before.

This consternation is the feeling alluded to by the angel, when he says: *And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, when they behold the beast, that was, and is not, and yet is*, again at the head of the most formidable empire the world ever saw.

But this wonder and consternation, the text says, agitated those whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. To such, these scenes were especially alarming.

By the term, foundation of the world, the angel means the introduction of the Christian dispensation—the foundation of

the gospel economy! The book of life metaphorically signifies the whole body of the Christian doctrine as taught by Christ and his apostles, and having the name written in this book implies an adherance to the doctrines of the gospel of the grace of God. And by those whose names are *not* written in this book of life, are meant the false systems of religion; a corrupted Christianity, which is of man's own devising, and which he adheres to in opposition to the pure system of Christianity as taught in the word of God. Was not this the religion of Europe, when the beast made his second appearing?

These are they who are represented as being struck with wonder, or are seized with fear and dread, when they behold the overthrow and destruction of the old despotic governments. The religious despotism of Europe trembled when it beheld the thrones of despotic power, with which it had been leagued for centuries, falling before the arms of Europe's conqueror. When it saw the whole Germanic empire —the scarlet-colored beast, on which the woman sat in gorgeous array and in supreme authority, prostrated and broken up;—and still more, when it beheld the patrimony of St. Peter snatched from the hands of pontifical rule, and the Pope himself a captive and prisoner—in the presence of such scenes, the woman must have shuddered with a wonder more pregnant with agony, than the common meaning ascribed to that word, conveys.

*All* Europe *wondered* at the daring exploits of Buonaparte; the world stood amazed at the rapidity with which he uncrowned and humbled the sovereigns of the neighboring kingdoms. This surprise was a feeling common to all, and shows that the angel means a stronger and deeper feeling of astonishment that is implied by the common use of the word, wonder; for, he says, that only those were effected with this feeling, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world—evidently meaning that system of corrupt religion, whose authority and existence

depended chiefly upon the stability of those very powers which were near falling by the sword of Napoleon.

Seeing the bulwarks of despotism giving way upon every hand, Popery might well apprehend that such a general rupture and explosion, would be followed by similar effects upon its own ecclesiastical tyranny ; and that Europe would be thrown open to the free exercise of religious opinion and religious liberty ! This apprehension has been realized to a very great extent, and is distinctly pointed to and illustrated by the angel seen by the prophet, *flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.* (Fourteenth chapter.)

I have only one more point to remark upon in relation to the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

In several instances in the progress of this work, we have had occasion to notice the remarkable coincidence between the prophecy and the events to which it referred ; and have been astonished at hearing the announcement of the prophet echoed by the voice of history. Such an instance occurs in the present case.

Buonaparte published a decree in May, 1808, setting forth his reasons for wresting the ecclesiastical states out of the hands of the Pope. In that decree he refers to Charlemagne in this language: "Whereas, the donation of Charlemagne, *our illustrious predecessor*," &c. Here is a most remarkable historical fact, going to show that the French empire, created by Napoleon, was the second state of the beast ; or the restoration of the empire of Charlemagne, which had been absorbed by the Germanic empire, and then *was not ;* it had lost its first peculiarity, its imperial French head ; but now is restored to its original *French sovereignty!* and yet is ; or exists again.

When Buonaparte speaks of Charlemagne as his illustrious predecessor, we are led to ask : where are all those German emperors, whose renown extended from Otho the Great,

of the tenth century, down to Francis II., in whose reign the empire was broken up in 1896? Buonaparte pays no attention to them, he does not notice one of them: and, as if they were quite unknown to him, he looks over their heads away back to the centuries, when the sovereignty of the empire was in the French nation, and says: "Charlemagne, "my illustrious predecessor!"

This is but one of the numerous instances in which the history of Napoleon responds, with surprising precision, to the announcements of prophecy.

Having disposed of the beast that the prophet first saw, whose history is condensed in the small compass of the eighth verse, the angel now resumes the history of the woman, and the beast that carried her; this is the empire under its Germanic head that he now speaks of, leaving out the eighth verse, which has reference exclusively to the beast in its first and second appearance under its French head. The words of the angel are these: *I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*

This saying of the angel has given rise to the opinion that the woman spoken of was the City of Rome, and that the seven hills upon which Rome was originally built, are referred to under the name of mountains.

Without entering into any argument to show the utter improbability that such was the meaning of the angel, I shall just say that the Apocalypse has nothing to do with *cities*, as mere habitations of men; its aims are of a higher and much more important kind. It treats of the great principles of nations; and points them out by their acts, and the moral and political effects which those acts produce upon the world. Such a purpose would be greatly departed from, if it were to stoop so low as to occupy itself with the mounds of earth upon which some city was accidentally built.

Another opinion is expressed by a learned commentator,

Doctor Adam Clarke, with much greater show of probability, but still not more correct than the former. The Doctor, after an elaborate argument, comes to the conclusion that the seven mountains, are the seven electorates of the empire, and as the high dignity of electing the emperor rested upon them, he considers mountains as being a most appropriate metaphorical description of those electorates. His argument, however, tangles itself, and throws his whole theory into confusion.

In correcting the Doctor's opinion, it is proper to remark that, in no instance is it said the woman sat upon the *heads* of the beast. She is uniformly represented as sitting *upon* the *beast*, not upon its heads. But does not the angel say, that *the seven heads are seven mountains, upon which the woman sitteth?* Whatever the angel says, is true ; but do we take his meaning correctly when we interpret him in such a way as to involve an utter impossibility ? Can the subjects alluded to by the angel, upon any correct principles of figurative or metaphorical speech, be the heads of the beast, and at the same time be mountains too ? The heads of the beast are of themselves a figurative representation of certain political powers ; and it would be a singular and most awkward sort of communication to employ an object in a figurative way, and then take up a second object and use it figuratively to illustrate the first figure or metaphor. Such a *compound* mode of metaphorizing would be a departure from the dignity and style of the prophetic writings. These mountains must have some other reference—they must designate some other power connected with the interests of the woman.

The woman sitting upon the beast expresses the great power the church exercised over the empire ; but when she sits upon the seven mountains, she is then represented in her ecclesiastical character, *only*, and not interfering at all with the political powers of the kingdoms of the earth.

It should be borne in mind, that the angel is now describing both the *woman*, which represents the church, and the

beast which represents the empire; and the first subject of explanation is the remarkable coincidence, or resemblance between the two, in the peculiar mode of appointing their respective heads. It is not necessary to reiterate the manner of electing the imperial head of the empire—this was done by the electoral college, or the seven heads of the beast. And when the angel says the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth, he means to inform us that, corresponding with this depository of the power to select the imperial head of the empire, there is, in the ecclesiastical constitution of the church, a similar power, precisely the same in number, and invested with the high prerogative of selecting and nominating the supreme head of the church.

Mountains are the standing metaphor of those interests which belong exclusively to the church, when she is treated of in her abstract character; and they are rarely employed in relation to anything else, except where they are used to heighten the grandeur and increase the sublimity of those scenes in prophetic description, which shake the earth with storms of divine wrath. The institutions alluded to by the seven mountains are described by Gibbon. I will just give his own account of them and then proceed to remark upon the peculiar phraseology of the angel, when he compares the mountains with the seven heads.

"In the Christian aristocracy," says Gibbon, "the principal members of the clergy still formed a senate to assist "the administration, and to supply the vacancy of the "bishop. Rome was divided into twenty-eight parishes, "and each parish was governed by a cardinal-priest or presby-"ter. Their number was enlarged by the association of "the seven deacons of the most considerable hospitals—"the seven Palatine Judges of the Lateran, and some dig-"nitaries of the church. The ecclesiastical senate was "*directed by the seven Cardinal Bishops of the Roman province.* "Their respective dioceses were: Ostia, Porto, Velitræ, "Tuscalum, Bræneste, Tibur, and the Sabines. On the

"death of the Pope, *these bishops recommended a successor to* "*the suffrage of the College of Cardinals.*"

These seven dioceses were the seven *mountains* spoken of by the angel. The woman sat on these, inasmuch as each successive head of the church was originated by them, and they *resembled*, in this respect, the seven heads of the beast—the seven electorates, whose voice gave the imperial head to the empire.

The angel says the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth ; but, as before remarked, these could not be both heads and mountains at the same time. We are, therefore, under the necessity of supposing that the angel is making a comparison, and means that the seven heads of the beast resemble the seven mountains ; or, to speak without the use of the figure, the seven electors who appoint the emperor correspond with the seven bishops by whom the Pope is nominated to the ecclesiastical senate.

The saying of the angel, that the seven heads *are* seven mountains, is the constant mode used by scripture-writers when they speak of the resemblance of one thing to another. The Scriptures do not say of a thing that it resembles or represents another thing ; but its language is almost uniformly of a positive character : thus, I *am* the vine, ye *are* the branches ; I am the *Shepherd*, ye *are* the sheep.

The explanation given by Joseph of Pharaoh's dream, is a striking instance of this peculiar manner of speaking. *And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, the seven good kine are seven years ; and the seven good ears are seven years. And the seven thin and ill-favored kine that came up after them are seven years ; and the seven empty ears, blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine.*

These examples are sufficient to show that the angel, in this instance of the heads and the mountains, was instituting a comparison between the two, merely as a remarkable coincidence in the manner of appointing the respective heads of the two greatest powers of Europe in that day, the emperor

and the Pope ; and thus, also, the surprising exactness with which prophecy delineates the events of the world a thousand years and more before they transpire.

The angel next proceeds to explain the political character of the beast. Beginning at the tenth verse, he says, *And there are seven kings.*

That the angel is not speaking of individual sovereigns is quite obvious, for it is impossible that this empire could have been ruled by seven monarchs at one time ; and it is quite as certain that the explanation would have no meaning in it if we attempt to apply it to the number of emperors who had reigned previous to the period of the vision ; for the number is far greater than that named by the angel.

The meaning of the angel can be nothing else than this : that within the German Empire were comprised seven principal kingdoms or powers, all ambitious of the honor of furnishing the imperial head of the empire. These were, probably, France, Spain, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, and Prussia. Although Austria and Prussia were later than the others in assuming the full form of kingdoms, nevertheless they were, in their earlier state of dukedoms, in a position to contend with the other kingdoms for the honor of furnishing the imperial head, just as much as they were when at a subsequent period they enlarged their political power, and took the title of kingdoms. The angel is predicting the history of the empire as well as describing its political character, and he announces that this struggle for the imperial honor will end in the triumph of *one* of those kingdoms over all the rest in fixing the succession of the emperors within itself. This prediction was literally fulfilled by the imperial dignity becoming *hereditary in the House of Austria.* Frederick III. of Austria was elected emperor in 1439 ; and since that period, says the historian, the imperial dignity has been hereditary in the House of Austria.

Of these seven kings, the angel says five are fallen ; and

one is, and the other is not yet come. The five kingdoms represented as fallen, were fallen only so far as the right to furnish the head of the empire is concerned. They never after that period furnished the imperial head of the empire ; that honor was enjoyed entirely by the House of Hapsburgh or Austria. And it was this kingdom of Austria the angel refers to when he says, *and one is*—that is, one of the seven. The sixth now exercises imperial authority, and will continue to do so—the first five having fallen—until the other, the seventh, shall come. This seventh king was France ; and it is said, when he cometh he must continue a short space. But what he did is stated in the eleventh verse : *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.*

This is France in the character of the beast, referred to in the eighth verse, where it is said he should ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.

The bottomless pit infallibly connects France with the power spoken of. It was from the pit of her revolution—from that abyss of blood and anarchy, that the beast made his second appearance as an eighth power.

This two-fold numerical feature of the last kingdom is very remarkable, and adds another surprising instance of the precision with which the finger of prophecy points to the most minute events in the history of the world's future.

The explanation of the seventh king, which also became an eighth power, is this : France, that is, the old French nation, was one of the seven kings or kingdoms. She was not amongst the five kings who had fallen, but was the last one which had not then come.

After her revolution this seventh power assumed imperial dominion, entirely absorbing the whole Germanic empire, and establishing a new and far more splendid and powerful one upon its ruins. This was a new form of power, coming out of the old French kingdom ; it was the seventh kingdom, rising into imperial grandeur and magnificence ; in which it

so far surpassed the old kingdom of France, that it was distinguished by the angel with a separate and distinct numerical feature above and beyond all others. It was *of the seven*, but became an *eighth* power; it was the old *kingdom* of France, rising to an empire of splendor and renown.

The angel says, of this eighth power: *And when he cometh he must continue a short space.* How true are all the sayings of this wonderful prophecy!

When Buonaparte had established himself, and restored the nation to order, after the storm of the revolution, he saw the German empire in the hands of Francis II. of the house of Austria. In 1806 he took it out of the hands of the Austrian; corrected its awkward deformities, and blending it with the other kingdoms of Europe, he raised, before the gaze of the astonished world, the French empire, unrivalled in power, and unequalled in grandeur.

From whatever point the eye of the politician looked upon this great empire, he saw in it invincible power, and unlimited duration. But the voice of prophecy had declared, seventeen centuries before this empire existed, that it should continue but a short space; and, in less than ten years from the period of its origin, this vast creation of human genius—the greatest combination of civil and military power the world ever saw, was conquered and taken to pieces, and the kingdoms and powers which formed its majestic structure, again resumed their separate national identity and existence. As if to show the nations of the earth that their mightiest monarchies are but chaff when God blows upon them, this formidable empire sunk and disappeared from the gaze of the world, as entirely as its great head did, when he was banished to the lonely island of St. Helena.

Thus the empire which arose with Charlemagne, and continued to over-ride Europe under its German form, until, suddenly as it were, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, it burst upon the world again with astonishing magnificence, under the authority of France, the same nation that

originated it a thousand years before, now comes to an irreparable end; as the angel says—*goes into perdition*—meets its final overthrow. There has been no such empire in Europe—no such formidable array of military power, as this French empire, since its overthrow; nor will there ever be again, while the truth of Christian prophecy remains—which consigned this empire to perdition.

The angel continues his explanations. In the 12th verse, he says: *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.*

This part of the explanation takes us back to the early days of the scarlet-colored beast, when all the kingdoms of Europe were pretty much under the dominion of the woman who sat upon the beast. These ten horns were so many sovereignties not under the same relation to the empire as the seven heads were; they received power *as kings one hour with the beast;* that is, they exercised a power independent of the emperor—moved in a circle exclusively their own; but still, as the 13th verse says: *these have one mind; and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.* 14th verse: *these shall make war with the Lamb and the Lamb shall overcome them, &c.* This explains what is meant by having one mind, and giving their power and strength unto the beast—they united their power with the imperial power in opposing the Reformation—in making war with the Lamb.

But in the progress of the Reformation, these powers, or horns, became converted from the Romish to the Protestant religion, and, as the angel says, in the 16th verse, they turned their hostility against the woman; they are represented in the strong figurative language of the prophecy, as hating the woman and making her desolate and naked, and as eating her flesh, and burning her with fire; expressions which imply a strong and unwavering purpose to subdue and annihilate the object or thing which has produced the hostility. The costly and magnificent drapery with which

the woman is adorned will be torn off; her supporters and admirers will forsake her; she will be left desolate and naked; the powers that have upheld her will turn from her, and she will thus be reduced to a condition of helpless wretchedness. Eating her flesh, is that figurative expression of a dead carcase thrown out for the fowls of the air to feed upon; a thing not only worthless, as having no vitality in it, but also disgusting and offensive: a dead carcase given to birds and beasts of prey.

Burning her with fire signifies the particular means by which this desolation of the woman will be chiefly brought about—wars and revolutions. Her strong fortresses of political power will be fired; the despotic governments of Europe that constitute her defence will be overthrown by the progress of enlightened and liberal principles. Every fresh revolution, having for its object the rights and liberties of the people, will serve to burn away the props which uphold ecclesiastical as well as civil despotism.

These reverses began sensibly to shake the dominion of the woman, even in the reign of Charles V. During his reign, half of Germany, as well as much of the population of the countries on the continent, together with England and Scotland, began to assail the errors and expose the corruptions of the Church of Rome. The powerful arguments and appeals of the reformers uncovered the deformities of the woman, and exposed her nakedness to the world. The French Revolution and its subsequent events carried the assaults upon her still further, and began to eat her flesh; while the present age is ever and anon, by the outburst of revolutionary struggles, giving signs of the burning which is finally to consume the whole system by the overthrow of all despotic governments. The aim and ultimate purpose of Christianity, in what it is to accomplish even in the present world, demands the entire freedom of the human mind. Every shackle, whether civil or religious, that binds down the mind of man to

a state below its proper destiny, will inevitably be torn away.

There are two explanations made by the angel yet to be noticed.

In the first verse of this chapter he calls the attention of the prophet to the woman sitting upon many waters; and in the fifteenth verse he informs him that these waters represent peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues. And finally, in the concluding verse of the chapter, the angel declares that the woman is that great city which reigneth over the *kings of the earth.* No one can be at a loss to know what church is here meant. The *city* and the *woman* are mere symbols, the thing meant is a church. And the church that has reigned over the kings of the earth, and extended her power over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, is the woman of the seventeenth chapter of the Apocalypse.

The explanations of the angel close with this chapter, and the prophet resumes the narrative of his visions.

In the succeeding chapter we shall be entertained with a very vivid picture of the actual effects, which were foretold by the angel, as the consequence of the converson of the ten horns. In short, we shall see the wonderful changes which have taken place in the civil and religious world since the influence of the Reformation has pervaded Europe, down to the present time, and what yet remains to be accomplished in its future history.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE DISCOVERY OF THE ART OF PRINTING, AND THE DOWNFALL OF BABYLON.

THE preceding chapter presents a striking picture of the control which the church exercised over the kingdoms of Europe at the commencement of the Reformation, and the persecutions and bloodshed that tried the faith and destroyed the lives of multitudes of those who had renounced her doctrines, after the light of that event had imparted the true knowledge of Christianity.

This power of the church grew out of the practice of the emperors—first the French, and afterwards the German—of receiving their crowns from the Pope.

This was at first a mere ceremony, condescended to as complimentary of the Pope ; but the practice, by usage, at length acquired the force of law, and the kings and emperors who did not acknowledge the paramount authority of the Pope, were made to hear and to feel the thunders of the Vatican.

When kings bowed before this authority, what else could their subjects do but render like homage to it, and honestly believe, too, that all power, whether of a heavenly or earthly nature, must be in the hands of the Pope.

This was the moral night of the world, and so it would have remained, waxing darker and darker to this day, if its gloom had not been penetrated by the light of the Reformation and the power of the press.

The preaching alone of Luther and Zuinglius and their fellow-laborers, would have effected but little in the way of pull-

ing down the thrones of error and superstition, if their efforts had not been assisted by the art of printing. The press became the great engine of spreading light amongst the people.

The discovery of the art of printing preceded the rise of the Reformation, as it was proper it should do. Before it could be fully prepared for the great work it had to do, it had to undergo many changes and improvements ; it had to construct its presses, prepare and perfect its types, and acquire a facility in using them, so as to secure despatch and accuracy. The labor of improving this wonderful engine of spreading knowledge was going on for nearly half a century before the Reformation took the stand which required its active assistance.

Luther had only disturbed the slumbers of the Wittenbergers, to whom he first denounced the errors of his own church, and preached a better gospel than Rome promulgated. But the time soon after arrived when the long and deep sleep of the world was to be broken. The voice of the gospel was heard, in the language of one of old, crying to the people, *awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light.* The doctrines of the Reformation were spread amongst the people, by means of printing, to an extent that they never could have been without its co-operation. These two instrumentalities of publishing to the world the true religion, in their harmonious action have produced the great light referred to in the text : *And the earth was lightened with his glory.*

This glory comprehends more than spreading a pure Christianity, although this is its greatest excellency. But the arts and sciences also have risen to a perfection and permanency which they probably never would have attained without the power of this angel. The fact is plain before the eyes of the world, that the arts and sciences, as well as government, and whatever tends to improve the condition of man and promote his happiness, are in a state of improvement and perfection in those countries where a free press and a free religion ex-

ist, to a degree greatly in advance of those countries where the freedom of both is restrained.

These types, small and insignificant as they appear to be, are the most powerful agents in the world in overthrowing kingdoms and empires. They are more dreaded by the despots of the earth than gunpowder and cannon-balls ever were.

The angel, described by the prophet in this chapter, is *the art of printing*, in the full, free, and unrestrained exercise of its powers.

1. *And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power ; and the earth was lightened with his glory.*

2. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and foul bird.*

3. *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*

We are not to suppose that the prophet confined himself to the order of events, as they occurred at successive periods of time, when he says : *And after these things I saw another angel, &c.*, as if that which he now speaks of had not existed until all the events previously noticed had transpired.

When he says, *after these things*, he means after these revelations there was another revelation made to me, in which I saw another angel come down from heaven. He could not tell everything at once, even if we suppose that the world's whole future had been thrown open to his view at one time. He has just finished, or rather the angel has just concluded his explanation of the great civil and ecclesiastical power of Europe in combination, and traced them down to their overthrow and extinction ; and he now gives us, in the vision of this chapter, the agencies which have been chiefly instrumen-

tal in producing their overthrow, which was the angel that he now speaks of.

The Apocalypse, now freed from the particular line, or succession of events, which had previously controlled its visions, opens to the view of the prophet in a promiscuous way, several important events which have aided in producing the great changes in civil and religious governments, noticed in the preceding chapter.

The angel cannot be said to symbolize the Reformation; for the Reformation was nothing more than the revival or reäppearance of what had been well-known to the world long before.

Christianity was no stranger to the world; it had lived and prevailed almost fifteen hundred years before this angel made his appearance. It had survived the destruction of the nation that gave it birth, and afterwards conquered the Roman empire in its religion, the very power which had destroyed the nation from which Christianity sprung.

But the art of printing was a new thing in the world. *It* had never been known to men before the fifteenth century. It came just at the time its services were needed. It came just when Christianity recommenced its great struggle with the powers of the world, and the darkness that covered the minds of the people. This was the torch which Christianity seized, and by its light illumined the dark places of the earth; and, to use a figure familiar to us all in the present day—the art of printing is the great steam-engine upon which Christianity over-rides and prostrates the institutions of superstition and despotism.

*And the earth was lightened with his glory.* The power of printing has forced the light of civilization, and improved man's political and religious condition, even to the ends of the earth.

The proper liberty of man does not depend so much upon any particular form of government, as upon the *principles* of his government. Safe and permanent liberty is based upon

the revealed word of God ; and whatever nation takes this for the model of its government, and conforms its laws with this revealed will, cannot fail to enjoy that liberty which is most consistent with the happiness of man. This truth is laid down amongst those axioms by which our Savior describes the true liberty of man : *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* This, like most of the great principles of the moral government of God, is alike applicable to nations and individuals.

This angel introduces the era of a great conflict—the powers of truth with the powers of error. Christendom was then under the dominion of a false and superstitious religion. Man was under the worst kind of bondage. His mind was imprisoned by a religious system which opposed light, and maintained itself by cruelty instead of revelation.

The angel introduces an antagonistic power—the power of enlightening men. Between these powers there was of necessity a desperate struggle. The result of this struggle is announced at the same time that the cause of it is announced, which, by its gradual operation, is to produce this result—*Babylon the great is fallen, fallen!* This great world-wide system of religious oppression is termed Babylon the great, which connects it with the woman of the seventeenth chapter, that being one of the distinguishing titles written upon her forehead. This name is derived from the stern and unrelenting dominion over the minds of men, which was the peculiar characteristic of the church of that day ; a slavery infinitely more cruel and debasing than the bondage of the body.

The angel cries with a *loud voice,* signifying the vast consequences of its triumph—*Babylon is fallen;* and, as if to make the declaration more emphatic, he repeats—*is fallen!*

The blows which Luther, and Zuinglius, and their coworkers in the Reformation, dealt to this gigantic power, and which have been followed up with increasing force and frequency by the power and light of this angel, have caused

it to totter and yield, until this very Babylon, which formerly uttered its voice, and the thrones of Europe trembled, now requires the bayonets of Austria and France to protect its trembling shadow of power, and to uphold its dying authority, even in Rome itself.*

The prophet announces this downfall of Babylon as the grand climax of the glory of this angel. But he now proceeds to things more particular : *And is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird.*

The meaning of this description of her moral character, is not that she has become thus corrupt and vicious, since this angel came into the world, but that these traits and peculiarities were only *now* made manifest, by the light of the angel. The true character of this spiritual Babylon, now comes to be known throughout the world, by the spreading of the knowledge of gospel truth, by means of the art of printing ; and, for the want of this facility, she had kept her dark depravity concealed from the knowledge of mankind in all previous ages.

This much the prophet says, in the 3d verse : *for all nations*, not having the means of fully understanding the corruptions and abominations of the church, *have drunk of the wine of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed sick through the abundance of her delicacies.*

The people were stupified and besotted by the vicious teachings of their spiritual guides ; the system infected its votaries with all the depravity peculiar to itself, and the political powers of the earth rendered a blind and infatuated obedience to the authority of the Pope.

The merchants of the earth, in the twenty-fifth verse, are styled the great men of the earth. This greatness is not political or civil ; neither does it arise from that importance

* 1851.

which success in trade gives to men ; but it signifies the pre-eminent rank and honor, above all other men, which was conferred upon all who exercised the least figment of authority in the great Babylonish system. Priests, bishops, cardinals, and Popes, received the humblest submission and most servile adulation of the people. In this way, the property and the bodies and souls of deluded votaries were at the command of these great men of the earth. They are called merchants figuratively, because they traded in the spiritual treasures of the church. They sold indulgences, sold deliverance from purgatory, and sold heaven itself. It is not surprising that these merchants became rich men as well as great men. Their merchandize became very desirable in the eyes of the people, and no price could be too exorbitant for such inestimable treasures.

As the Reformation progressed and the light of the true religion spread, better views of Christian duty, and a higher sense of religious propriety, would necessarily obtain amongst men. Almost the first conviction they would experience under this superior light would be the danger of continuing a connection with a church that now disclosed such a state of gross immorality as that described in the second verse. Not only must men renounce the false teachings of their former religion, but they must forsake all connection with it. They must not remain where they were, for evil communications corrupt good manners, in a religious as well as in a social state.

Luther had no intention of separating from the Church of Rome when he first assailed its errors. His object went no further than to correct its errors and reform its doctrines. But this temporising policy would not answer. The old system was too rotten in all its parts to admit of being successfully repaired. It could not be patched into strength and usefulness ; it must be abandoned and left to the fate denounced against it in the eighth verse, *to be utterly burned with fire.*

The religion of the Reformation could not associate with the old system of superstition and corruption ; it required a new system adapted to its purer doctrines and its more holy faith. This is expressed by the voice which the prophet heard in the fourth verse :

4. *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues :*

5. *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.*

The establishment of the Protestant Church as distinct from the Church of Rome, illustrates this voice and conforms to its requirements. The doctrines and faith of the Protestant religion are embodied in this church, and are placed before the world in striking contrast to popery, that all may see the difference. In the one, the world beholds the light and power of gospel truth, while in the other it sees nothing but lifeless ceremonies and blinding superstition. The open and daring impieties of that church, it is said, have reached unto heaven—have towered to such a height and spread to such an extent that all the world may see them ; all people who sincerely desire to know the truth as Christ and his apostles have proclaimed it, will be no longer in any danger of being led astray by the false lights of a corrupt religion.

The true gospel church being now fully established, and its doctrines generally promulgated by means of the art of printing, the line of distinction is clearly drawn between a true and a false Christianity, and the remaining portion of the chapter now under consideration is employed in setting forth the various circumstances which attend the gradual decline and final suppression of the authority, and even the name, of the "Apostolic Church."

6. *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works : in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.*

7. *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously,*

*so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*

8. *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

It is manifest from these three verses that allusion is had to period of time when Protestantism is greatly in the ascendant, and when she has it in her power to deal as she pleases with the rival religion—her old adversary, who, when in power, practiced upon Protestantism the greatest wrongs and cruelties.

But we must not suppose that anything revengeful or vindictive is inculcated by what seems to be a command to retaliate upon her the inhumanity of her own former course of treatment towards Protestantism. I rather consider the meaning of these verses to be, that as the political powers that once executed the bigoted and persecuting decrees of popery against Protestantism, cruelly oppressing it, and denying it those political advantages which were enjoyed by the subjects of popery, have become converted to the new religion, and, with their religious conversion, their political measures undergo a great change, and, instead of exalting popery, they now depress it; deny it those privileges which are accorded to Protestantism, and allow it a very restricted participation, if any at all, in the measures of the government, not admitting it to the councils of the nation; in short, denying it the exercise of any of those public functions appertaining to the ministration of government.

Such a course of treatment as this must be humiliating to Popery in the last degree, and torture its pride beyond endurance: *Because she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, saying in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.* To fall from such a state of exalted pride and eminence, to one of obscurity and contempt, would be indeed doubling to her the cup of shame and oppression, which she filled for Protestantism, in the days of her power and pride.

The torment and sorrow of such a fall, grow out of the fact that this apostate religion has ever boasted of its supremacy over all earthly powers, sitting upon the scarlet-colored beast and using the great sword of civil power in maintaining its authority over the world.

As Protestantism was gradual in its rise and progress in the earth, Popery is, likewise, gradual in its decline. Very few great changes in the world's history have been sudden. Providence moves by deliberate steps.

The declaration that her plagues shall come in one day, (8th verse,) by no means signifies that Babylon is to fall suddenly, but that she will experience the effects of death, and mourning and famine in *one day;* that is, three different causes of her declension will operate at the same time, to produce that result.

The death, may refer to the loss of her temporal power. Not only does she no longer reign over the kings of the earth, but she is unable to keep up her authority at home without the sword of foreign powers.

Mourning would naturally follow the loss of her great authority, which she once exercised over the kings of the earth, and famine represents the loss of that aliment of her existence, which she once derived in great abundance by the sale of her spiritual merchandise; but which trade also ceases, as we shall presently see, at the same time that she is feeling the severe pressure of other plagues; and, that the destruction may be complete and entire it is added: *And she shall be utterly burned with fire! for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.* The correspondence between this 8th verse and the 16th verse of the preceding chapter, is striking. In the latter it is said, that the ten kings shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire; in the 8th verse, it is said: *She shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.* Every event, therefore, which tends to destroy this Babylon,

and banish it from Christendom, we may be assured is under the direction of the Providence of God.

Commentators generally agree in the opinion, that this burning with fire refers to the *City of Rome;* and they understand it literally. But, with all deference to their acknowledged wisdom, I must say, I cannot perceive how a false religion is to be overthrown by burning down one city, or a hundred cities. If Rome were burnt down, Rome could and would be built up again ; and what would be gained in the way of destroying Popery ? Just nothing at all.

This burning with fire is a figurative mode of speech, which implies total destruction : as whatever substances fire acts upon are entirely destroyed by it. We shall see the progress of these plagues, and of this burning, in the subseqent verses of this chapter.

9. *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.*

10. *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas! alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

These verses instruct us that some of the powers of Europe will tenaciously adhere to the interests of Popery through all its plagues and torments ; and when they can no longer defend her, or effectually assist her cause, they will bewail her misfortunes, and lament over her fall.

This is altogether a political scene. It is not a religious grief that affects those kings ; their sorrow is selfish and political.

While the kingdoms and governments of the earth, that are in the Protestant interest, are, by the influence of their enlightened and liberal principles, curtailing the power of Popery—extending the area of freedom—the kingdoms which uphold the dominion of Rome, are exerting themselves to defend and maintain her authority.

We have seen a recent instance of this in the effort of

Rome to throw off the yoke of oppression. The armies of Austria were immediately marched to the support of the Pope, and France, too, with a view to her future policy, threw her legions into Rome, for the same purpose. The political world stood amazed at the course taken by France on that occasion, but now, since the *coup d'etat* of Louis Napoleon, the whole matter is understood. He never meant to relinquish his rule over the French nation. He cared not by what title he reigned, republican president, or emperor, were both the same to him. When he could no longer rule as President of France, he resolved to be Emperor. And he knew, and so did Austria, that the abject submission of the subjects of the Pope, to his commands, in all countries, was a better guaranty of the preservation of their thrones than the mandates or the sword of the Emperor.

When the power of the king failed to subdue his refractory subjects, the dreaded anathema of the Pope was all-sufficient for that purpose. Austria, as she is the most despotic, so she is the most reliable support of Popery now in Europe. But her power must at length fail, and the mutual support of each other will cease ; then will the great city begin rapidly to fall, and the crash of her ruin will be heard throughout the nations, and the smoke of her burning will ascend before the eyes of all the world. In this crisis of her calamity, the kings of the earth who have been in league with her, are represented as standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, alas, alas! &c.

Standing afar off, signifies that they were unable to render her any aid ; and they were afraid or alarmed at her torment. They beheld the chief support of their thrones sinking under the progress of liberal and enlightened Christianity, and they dreaded the effects which this state of things would produce upon their own subjects.

The authority of the church kept their subjects in submismission more effectually than the sword did, and when they beheld this authority sinking, these kings stood afar off and

cried—*Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in an hour is thy judgment come.*

The greatness of this city consisted in this, that she reigned over the kings of the earth. She removeth the king from his throne at one time, and at another she dissolved the allegiance of the subjects to their king

How manifest are the operations of cause and effect, and how clearly marked is the hand of retributive Providence in this picture of Babylon's downfall.

This Apocalyptic woman, or, in other words, the original Apostolic Church, lured by the lust of power, abandoned the purity of her primitive character, and threw herself into the arms of the kings of the earth. Filled with pride and ambition from this anti-christian connection, she assumed to be the mistress of the kingdoms of the earth ; she put up and put down whom she would. But the hour of her judgment is come, and she falls, and her fall brings down those kings who courted her favors, and reveled in her pleasures.

So far the prophet has been pointing to the political effects produced by the fall of this great Babylon ; he now discloses its consequences upon the church itself.

11. *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandize any more:*

12. *The merchandize of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble.*

13. *And cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.*

14. *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*

15. *The merchants of these things, which were made rich by*

*her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,*

16. *And saying, Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!*

17. *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,*

18. *And cried, when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!*

19. *And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.*

Mourning and weeping over the fall of the great city by the merchants of the earth, signify the privations and the poverty which are consequent upon the loss of their trade, *for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.*

These merchants have already been described: they are all those who trade in the spiritual advantages of the church, and who live in ease and luxury upon the superstition of her credulous devotees.

The sale of indulgences, absolution, bones, beads, and scraps of old garments—in short, everything that has been made sacred by the touch or the blessing of the priest, have contributed to enhance the luxury of the sacred order.

But, besides these, the deliverence from the pains of purgatory is another source of immense wealth to the church. What a vivid description of this trade is given in the eleventh and twelfth verses—figuratively, to be sure, but embracing everything that can gratify the appetite of the mind, the desire of the heart, and the lust of the affections, of man's fallen and corrupt nature!

The desire of wealth for the purpose of ostentatious display, or for the gratification of the low and sordid love of riches, was met by the license of the indulgence, which

authorized all and every means necessary to the attainment of the thing desired. Whoever purchased an indulgence of the proper grade, as sold by Tetzel and others, giving a suitable price for it, was fully armed with authority to possess himself of riches by any means. In proof of this, this merchant, Tetzel, was himself waylaid and robbed of the treasure which he had accumulated by the sale of indulgences, by the authority of one of the indulgences which he had sold !

The next list of articles which might be purchased from these merchants, imply the gratification of men's tastes for all that is refined or elegant—the most luxurious enjoyments of pomp and pleasure. These are expressed by the costly purple, and silk, and scarlet, and those substances capable of high polish, which are very ornamental.

Odoriferous woods, and ointments, and rich perfumes, with wine, and oil, and fine flour, are expressive of the high degree of pride and luxury which was enjoyed by the traffic with these merchants. The trade descends even to the coarser articles of human subsistence, wheat, beasts, and sheep. Even these inferior enjoyments came under the laws of the merchants, and in some way were taxed, or made conducive to the gains of the church. The list concludes with horses and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. This last description of things that were sold by these merchants of the earth, probably have reference to wars and conquests of whole countries, and the enslaving of their inhabitants. The horse and the chariot are proper emblems of ancient warfare, and slavery became the condition of the captives in those olden times.

The crusades were commenced and carried on by authority of these merchants, and heathen countries were conferred by the Pope upon their conquerors.

The *souls* of men, can have no other meaning, in connection with this particular exercise of the power of these merchants, than the natural *life* of men ! Even the lives of men were subjects of their trade ; and to what a horrible extent

this part of their trade was carried, may be seen by any who will follow the blood-stained track of the *Inquisition!*

But the progress of the Reformation, with its increasing light and gospel religion, is to put an end to this merchandizing. *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more!* like the kings, they stand *afar off*, for the fear of her torment, making dolorous lamentations, weeping and wailing, saying—alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls! This description of the great city is identical with the *woman* that sat upon the scarlet-colored beast. They are both symbols, and both refer to the Church of Rome.

This chapter, or that part of it now under consideration, furnishes a striking illustration of him that sat upon the black horse, with the balances in his hand, showing off the church in her avaricious spirit of merchandising. And it likewise fulfills the prediction of St. Paul, when he warned the church that she would apostatize, and that her leaders would convert her into a great bazaar—*would make merchandise out of her.*

But, in proper time, by the unerring hand of Providence, these great riches will be brought to naught. Verse 17:—*And every ship master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and gave similar signs of grief, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness; for in one hour is she made desolate.*

Neither ships, nor the sea, literally, are intended, but are used here figuratively, to signify the great extent of this city, or the universality of this religion, which, like the sea, extends to all the continents, and embraces all the islands. Ships and sailors are used to complete the figure, and they imply the established agencies and ecclesiastic orders in distant and different countries, by which the whole, wide-ex-

tended system is bound together in one church, under one supreme head—the Pope.

But, notwithstanding the great extent of this great city, in one hour she is made desolate! meaning not in one country, only, but everywhere throughout her vast dominion, she will fall and become desolate.

A most vivid picture of the desolate condition of the city is presented to us in the remaining verses of the chapter:

20. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

21. *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

22. *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee:*

23. *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.*

24. *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that was slain upon the earth.*

The fall of this city becomes the subject of rejoicing to all the righteous. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven.* The whole church, embracing the doctrines of the gospel of Christ; and ye holy *apostles* and *prophets;* none of whom can possibly be alive at the time here alluded to. The meaning, therefore, is: the doctrines of the Christian religion as taught by the apostles and prophets, is now triumphant, and have put down the old corrupt system of Christianity, by which the world has for so many ages been kept in darkness and error: *For God hath avenged you on her;* he has crowned the labors and sufferings of his faithful servants with a com-

plete triumph—the triumph of truth over error—of a pure evangelical religion, over the religion of superstition and idolatry.

And, as if to banish from the minds of men, all idea that this false system of Christianity will ever recover its power and influence in the earth ; a mighty angel is represented as casting a great millstone into the sea, and saying, *Thus with great violence shall that great city, Babylon, be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

The entire system of this Babylonish religion will become as completely lost from the notice and respect of men, as a mill-stone is lost from the sight when it is cast into the sea.

No pen of mere human genius has ever sketched such a picture of the loneliness, the solitude, and the death-like silence of a desolate city, as that which is given by the pen of inspiration in the twenty-second and twenty-third verses of this chapter. No comment upon them, no effort of genius or fancy to heighten or improve their effect, could do anything but offend their chaste and striking simplicity, and impair the awe and solemnity with which they inspire us.

The cause of this desolation is given by the prophet in these words : *For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.*

It is a fearful thing for either individuals or a church to practice *deception*, for desolation is the infallible consequence of such measures.

The concluding verse of the chapter says : *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.* A horrible disclosure this is, truly, to be made by the history of a church. It is the counterpart to the description of the woman in the sixth verse of the seventeenth chapter : *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*

And this is the church through which the *right* to administer gospel ordinances *must come*, say some Protestant divines.

This chapter might be summarily explained by referring to

the avarice, the luxury and debauchery, the gluttony, violence, rapine, and bloodshed, which distinguished the nations under the universal rule of this woman previous to the Reformation, and since its influence began to heal the moral diseases of those nations.

This great moral distemper was not checked, but rather increased, by the system of *compensation* for crime, and the open justification of it, which was secured by the authority of an "indulgence." These are some of the first fruits which a false religion must always bring upon men.

When the teachings of a church fall in with and tolerate the native corruptions of the human heart, there is no room for the growth of any virtuous principle. The prophet points out the apostasy of the church, most distinctly, in this chapter, and we must rely upon history for an explanation of his meaning.

The history of the inquisition is directly in point as one branch of the explanation. The scenes in Germany and Switzerland which the Reformation gave birth to, the torrents of blood shed by France and Spain all over Europe, in their efforts to extinguish the light of Protestantism, bear ample testimony to the truth of prophecy, and show the controlling authority with which the woman reigned over the kings of the earth.

A spirit the most revengeful and diabolical often betrayed itself in efforts to destroy Protestantism. Such instances were most conspicuous where no kingly power was employed, but when the dominant religion of the day sought to carry out its own suggestions.

Amongst all such instances there was none that equalled, in cool, deliberate malice, in its most diabolical form, the *gunpowder plot*. The placing of those "thirty-six barrels of gun-"powder under the parliament-house of England, with trains "and matches all prepared, to blow up the king and his par-"liament," was a scheme of wickedness which could have originated only in the mind of a demon. Even to this distant

day, the thought of such a horrible act of murderous bigotry as was well nigh being perpetrated makes the mind shudder, while it shows an extraordinary instance of the superintending care of Providence over the nation appointed to be the guardian-angel of the Protestant religion.

This gunpowder plot and other exhibitions of cruelty and bloody persecution, done in the name of religion, in past ages, are referred to for no other purpose than to show how truly the mirror of prophecy reflected events which would occur in the lapse of many centuries. The religion that gave its sanction to such deeds of horror was the religion of a dark age. It had its origin in worldly ambition, and its growth was in the soil of ignorance and superstition. Such were its necessary tendencies and its peculiarities. A morose and malignant temper was engendered by the solitude and seclusion of the cloister. The monkish cell was no place for the exercise of those noble and generous sympathies which belong to the Christian religion. Its field of action is the wide world, and the objects of its heavenly charities are the erring and wandering children of earth.

When the light of the Reformation appeared, popery put in motion every engine of *its* power to extinguish it.

The recovery and improvement of the human mind, after it has been for a long time habituated to darkness and error, and to raise it to the high and enlightened state of which it is capable, is the work of time and labor. This is strikingly illustrated, as a national example, in the history of the Israelites after their removal from Egypt.

The moral and mental degradation produced by their long servitude and bondage in that country, is manifested in the history of their forty years' journeying in the wilderness.

The constant presence of the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, admonishing them of the unceasing care and providence of God over them ; and then the sublime miracle of the open road, stretching out before them upon the bed of the Red Sea, by which they crossed over and escaped from

their pursuing enemy, and saw that enemy overwhelmed and destroyed by the same waters that had been walled up on either hand to give them a safe passage over ; and then the fall of the manna to satisfy their hunger, and the fountain of pure water, gushing from the rock, to quench their thirst. These amazing miracles failed to make any enduring impression upon their minds—they were lost upon their darkened and degraded moral sensibilities. Their cowardly murmuring at every occurrence of new difficulties, their insolent reproaches cast upon their leaders when they felt themselves safe from danger, and their servile and cowering fears when they saw it approaching ; their incessant murmurings, dissatisfaction, and despondency, with their constant reference to the flesh-pots of Egypt, and the desire to return to that land, show that they were a degraded, heartless, and ignorant people ; just what the cruelty and oppression of their former bondage was calculated to make them.

The superstition and servile fear produced by a false and tyrannical religion, will bring the mind into a similar state of imbecility and slavish drudgery, and must be, therefore, a hindrance to the designs of God—an enemy to his merciful purpose of raising man to the high moral and intellectual state for which He created him.

Protestantism, for a long time after she had cast off the bondage of Popish Babylon, gave occasional intimations of the principles of that religion. It was not easy to divest the mind entirely of those influences and errors which had for centuries kept the people buried in darkness.

To say nothing of the defects of Luther's theology, tinged with the absurdity of Popish teachings ; or, of the wild, fanatical lengths to which certain societies in Germany suffered themselves to be carried in their new religious liberty ; we find instances in the history of English Protestantism, and likewise in Switzerland, where the old dragon of persecution was allowed to gratify his peculiar taste for blood, in

a manner most revolting and painful to the feelings of the present enlightened state of the Protestant Church.

But that day of religious persecution is gone, never to return again. Babylon the great is fallen—is fallen! and now let us hasten to join the swelling chorus of the great multitude in the next chapter, as they shout the triumphs of Protestantism, and religious freedom to all nations.

# CHAPTER XIX.

## THE TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL CHURCH.

The scenes of this chapter are such, as it might be expected would succeed the subversion of the greatest spiritual despotism of the earth. A mighty power has fallen, which was adverse to the happiness of man and the glory of God ; and these scenes of triumph and rejoicing are the universal shout of exultation over the fallen power of this great adversary.

1. *And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia ; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God ;*

2. *For true and righteous are his judgments ; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

3. *And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*

4. *And the four and twenty elders, and the four beasts, fell down and worshiped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluia.*

5. *And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.*

6. *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

8. *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

9. *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

The prophet heard the voice of much people *in heaven!* meaning the general acclamation of praise and thanksgiving of the Church of God. The true church is constantly referred to in these prophecies, when connected with acts of worship, or giving glory to God. This great voice ascribes the overthrow of the great corrupter of the earth, to the judgments of God—*for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication.*

Superstition and its natural effect, idolatry, had been by this fallen church palmed upon the people for the religion of Christ—*for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.*

And the alleluia of their rejoicing was reiterated, *and her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*

This implies a perpetually-recurring memorial of the final overthrow of this church of sorcery and deception. This memorial will, probably, be some periodical celebration which Protestant Christians all over the world will institute for the purpose of rendering simultaneous and universal thanks for the deliverance of the church from the power and delusion of the antichristian Romish hierarchy. This idea seems to be favored by the fourth verse. The four-and-twenty elders and the four beasts, the representatives of the four grand divisions of the earth, unite in one solemn act of worship to God, saying, *amen*—an approving response of the whole church to the judgments by which great Babylon has been overthrown, adding, *alleluia!*—an ascription of praise to God for the happy effects of his judgments.

The institution of some such festival as is intimated above, occurring at stated periods, like those did amongst the old Jewish Church, seems probable also from the language of the

fifth, sixth, and seventh verses. A voice is heard from the *throne*, saying, *Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great*—meaning that all ranks and condition of men should be embraced in the great jubilee. This voice from the throne may be regarded as such a jubilistic occasion, and the sixth verse expresses the united praise of earth in the celebration of it.

The prophet seems to find some difficulty in selecting something by which he may adequately express the grandeur of the universal shout of praise which will go up from the jubilee. He says : *I heard the voice of a great multitude.* But, as if that did not reach it, he immediately adds, *and as the voice of many waters.* But still the comparison falls short of the reality. Not even the ceaseless roar of earth's mighty cataracts can give an adequate idea of it. He then refers to the deafening thunders as they burst and reverberate over the earth, shaking its very foundations, and says such will be the shout of that universal jubilee, when the people of God, in all the earth, shall lift up their voice, saying, *Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* This is the Church of Christ; and how simple and beautiful is the description of her appearance, arrayed *in fine linen, clean and white!* Contrast this dress with that in which the woman is seen, seated on the scarlet-colored beast, (chap. xvii. verse 4,) and we shall readily perceive the difference between the Church of Christ and the church of this world.

9. *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

10. *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God ; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

Who are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the

Lamb? All who have renounced the faith and communion of the great corrupter of religion, who have embraced the doctrines of the gospel church, and have no fellowship with the spiritual Babylon. To all such proclaim that they are blessed; encourage them not to cast away the hope because of any present difficulties, but confide in the promises of God, for they cannot fail; *for these are the true sayings of God.* This glorious union between Christ and his church on the earth, here spoken of under the similitude of a marriage, will truly and certainly come to pass.

The happy period is gradually approaching. As the errors and superstition of false religion fall and disappear, the truth and purity of the religion of Christ rise higher, and extend their influence and power over the kingdoms of the world. In this way the Lamb's wife is making herself ready for the joyful event of her marriage.

Astonished at these divine revelations, the prophet very naturally felt inclined to pay divine honors to his illustrious instructor, and fell at his feet to worship him; and beyond a doubt, if there ever was an occasion when a man might be excused for worshiping any other being than his Creator, this was such an occasion. But the proposed worship was instantly forbidden—*see thou do it not: worship God.*

The apostate church, whose fall, under the name of Babylon the Great, is exulted over in this chapter, commenced her separate and distinct history in the worship of images. It was this idolatry that caused the revolt of Gregory I., and erected the Western Church into an independent hierarchy.

The words of the heavenly admonitor to the prophet are a stern rebuke to this idolatry. *Worship God;* not an image nor a saint, not the Virgin, nor the most exalted angel, but worship God. This is the great law of true Christian worship, and any departure from it in the least degree, in spirit or in form, is idolatry. *See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.* Is it possible this illustrious personage, who could point out

and explain to the prophet the scenes of his vision; was he once a child of earth, a suffering mortal, an heir of death? Yea, verily; and no less a change than this will pass upon all those whose resurrection bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of their Lord and Saviour.

This is one of the glories to which Christianity points its subjects in the future world, as amongst the happy results of their warfare on earth. What matters it then if trials, afflictions and poverty be the Christian's lot on earth:

> "If, Lord, thou count him meet,
> With that enraptured host to appear
> And worship at thy feet."

11. *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself:*

13. *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

14. *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

15. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

16. *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*

The 11th verse commences a description of what may be regarded as a triumphal procession of the Church of Christ, after the overthrow of her adversary, the great Babylonian power. In a former chapter, the prophet in one of his visions, speaks of the temple being opened in heaven. That is, the gospel church had prevailed so far as to be established in Christendom, and the exercise of Protestant worship was

guaranteed to the people generally ; but still the old dragon retained considerable power, and in many parts of Europe under his influence, the exercise of this religious liberty was not allowed—the great temple of Protestant worship was opened in heaven, but not all over heaven. But, now the prophet sees all heaven opened—all lands—all people now worship God under their own vine and fig tree, and there is none to prevent or disturb them ; no bulls of excommunication—no anathemas of the Pope can now make them afraid.

The idea is that of a great *Champ de Mars*, suddenly rising and spreading itself out to a vast extent before the eyes of the prophet, and upon its boundless surface he beheld this grand procession.

The chief and most distinguished personage in the scene is the victorious head and leader, upon a white horse. His powers and qualities are named : he is called faithful and true, and in *righteousness* he doth judge and make war. How very different are the purposes of *his* war from those of the kings of the earth ? His judgments are for the establishment of righteousness and truth in the earth ; his warfare is not against men, but against their errors.

His eyes were as a flame of fire—denoting *Omniscience!* and on his head were many crowns ; a figure of speech, expressive of the conquests made by the gospel in reclaiming the kingdoms of the earth from the dominion of the false religion, and bringing them into subjection to the righteous government of Christ. This being done by the conquests of the gospel, he is represented wearing them as the trophies of his grace.

The next peculiarity in the character of this august personage demands the most serious attention : *And he had a name written that no man knew but himself.* This name was *written*, that is, it was published, proclaimed—was as fully declared and reiterated in as great a variety of forms, and under as great a variety of symbols and emblems as any other attribute of his character, and yet, *no man knew this*

*name*—no man could comprehend it. Why could no man know it but himself? because *divinity alone can comprehend divinity.* Christ alone can comprehend and understand his own mysterious and profound divinity. The character of our Savior in his divine nature is declared in this text; but it is also written elsewhere. It was written and proclaimed by the Jewish prophets, and most conspicuously by Isaiah, (ix. chap.: verse 6,) where he refers to Christ in his two-fold character—his humanity and his divinity: *For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful! Counsellor! The Mighty God! The Everlasting Father! the Prince of Peace!* Thus was this name written in the Jewish Church. To the Christian Church Christ himself declares his name to the same effect: *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. I am in the Father and the Father in me. I and my Father are one.* This same prophet, who is now describing this triumphant scene of the gospel church, published this name to the church thus: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was God! All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.* It is only necessary to add, that the word *name* is to be taken in a sense signifying nature—attributes: the sense in which the Psalmist uses it when he celebrates the majesty and glory of God, as seen in his works, he exclaims: *O Lord, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth.* viii. Psalm.

In no instance where this mysterious name is written, is there any attempt made to explain it; for the reason that no man can know it: that is, it cannot be understood by human reason. The *manhood*, or human nature of Christ is compatible with man's comprehension, but his divinity is not; no man can know it.

This name is not written for the purpose of *reasoning* men into an understanding of the divinity of Christ, for He, who made us, knew that the mightiest powers of the human intel-

lect must ever fail to comprehend it. It is presented to man as a subject of *faith*, and not a subject to which his understanding is adapted.

The prophet proceeds with his description : *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God*—corresponding with the title given him by St. John. The whole sacrificial atonement of Christ is embraced in this verse, and the merit and efficacy of that atonement are avouched in the latter clause of the verse : *And his name is called the Word of God.*

The armies which were in heaven, and are represented as following their great leader upon white horses, signify the multitude of believers who have been redeemed by faith in the atonement of Christ. They follow him in purity and holiness of life, represented by the fine linen, white and clean, in which they are clothed. This following Christ does not refer merely to the personal and individual life of God's people, preserving themselves from the spirit and wickedness of the world ; but it has a higher meaning. It points to the harmonious effort of the saints to spread the knowledge of God, and extend his righteous government amongst men. Those efforts have achieved wonders in extending the borders of the Redeemer's kingdom, since the four angels were charged to keep the peace of the world while the angel of the gospel sealed the people of God. The wonderful facility which the art of printing has furnished for spreading gospel truth is familiar to all ; and the various and efficient means which Protestant Christians are diligently employing are rapidly hastening the fall of Babylon the Great. The white horse is the common and familiar emblem of triumph.

The sharp sword which goeth out of his mouth, none can fail to understand, is the gospel of the grace of God. It is the familiar emblem of the gospel ; and smiting the nations with this sword implies the faithful preaching of this gospel, and enforcing its doctrines upon the people of all lands.

The present is pre-eminently the age of this vision. The pro-

digious efforts of the Protestant churches, and the success which has attended them in converting the people from their darkness and errors, and forcing a way for the light of the gospel into those countries which have ever been buried in the darkness of pagan idolatry, are well represented by the grand and triumphant procession of the armies which were in heaven following *him who is Faithful and True, and who doth make war, and judge in righteousness.*

*And he shall rule them with a rod of iron.* The law of God must become the law of all nations: that is the simple meaning of this verse. No compromising with false systems of religion—the world has had enough of this; and the nation that will not receive Christ and his religion must be prepared to meet the righteous indignation of Heaven, denounced against all who adhere to a false religion.

*And he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.* Christ becomes the executioner of the divine judgments upon the guilty nations that will not forsake their false and superstitious systems of religion. To such nations the warning is given that the execution of God's anger is committed to him, whose power is seen in his titles of pre-eminent majesty and might—*King of kings and Lord of lords.* These titles, in a political sense, would be understood as conveying the idea of an all-powerful monarch, capable by his vast powers of prostrating all other kingdoms—in short, that all other sovereigns rule by his permission. They are, therefore, an appropriate emblem of the great moral power which Christ possesses of inflicting the judgments of the Almighty upon the nations who reject his truth. Christ says the same thing himself in the fifth chapter of John, twenty-second verse: *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,* (twenty-seventh verse,) *and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man.*

All the powers necessary to carry out the great Christian dispensation, whether it calls for the exercise of mercy or

judgment, are committed to Christ. And it is in the execution of the judgments of the last day that he is represented as treading the wine-press of the wrath of God.

But what a scene of grandeur does this great Christian pageant present! Look at it, spreading itself out, and extending its vast length and breadth as it moves on through the world! Behold it covering the immense plain, then ascending the lofty mountains, and, passing over, descending again, and filling the great valleys which spread out from mountain to mountain, and extend to the ends of the earth! See the kingdoms of the world bowing before it, while the hovels of the poor are made joyful by its blessings! Earth sends up her loud hosannas in honor of it, while the temples of idolatry fall before it, and the votaries of a delusive religion forsake the altars of their superstition.

This is the progress of the gospel through the world, and it brings us to the next scene in the visions of the prophet, which is the supper of the great God, given to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven.

### THE GREAT SUPPER.

17. *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;*

18. *That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

19. *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*

20. *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped*

*his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

21. *And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceedeth out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

The supper is designed to express, figuratively, three things. It shows, in the first place, the close of the day, that being the meal always taken after the toil and labor of the day have ended. This supper is given at the end of the gospel-day. It expresses, in the second place, the final and complete overthrow of all systems and powers which are opposed to the universal government of Christ, comprehended under the title of the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, the false prophet that had delivered them by miracles, and all the worshipers of the beast and false prophet. All are represented as being conquered, and left upon the field to be devoured by the fowls of heaven.

In this picture the idea of total overthrow and abandonment is complete. This will be the end of the judgment day, when all that remains opposed to the authority of Christ will be like the garbage which is thrown out to feed the birds that prey upon such matter.

The third point of reference in this figure is its allusion to certain means which will precede and indicate the approach of this great supper.

These means I consider as referred to by the angel standing in the sun, and crying to all the fowls of heaven to prepare themselves for the supper of the great God.

Our Savior's conversation at different times respecting the signs and wonders which would precede the end of the gospel day, afford much instruction; and what he spoke in a mere literal way the prophet addresses to us allegorically.

It is enjoined upon Christians to watch for the occurrence of those signs to which Christ and his apostles have referred them.

There are events constantly arising upon the surface of the world's history, which outwardly, and, to superficial observers, wear nothing but a political aspect, when, at the same time, they may be intimately connected with the interests of Christianity. Some of those occurrences which have struck me as being of this character, I will refer to.

Upon all hands it will be admitted that England has exceeded all other nations in spreading the knowledge of the gospel. Her convenient position, her wide, extended commerce, her immense wealth, and her practical acquaintance with the doctrines of the Bible, have eminently qualified her to take the lead in enlightening the nations around her, and also to carry the light of the gospel to distant countries.

The angel that called the fowls of heaven to this great supper is represented as standing in the sun. The meaning of this is, that we may expect to see, in the country referred to under the symbol of the sun, some unusual and very extraordinary occurrences—not such as the ordinary means of proclaiming the gospel, but which will tend powerfully to bring about the overthrow of the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the earth, associated with them in the manner described in the twentieth verse. That overthrow will be both *political* and *religious*—kings and their armies signifying the former, and the beast and the false prophet the latter.

The occurrences which I consider as represented, particularly by the angel crying to the fowls of heaven to gather themselves to the great supper, will exert a great influence upon both of the above-named interests.

The combined effort of the different Protestant nations to bring about great moral and political changes in the earth, must exert a powerful influence favorable to that object. Even small associations in limited communities, often produce the most salutary effects upon the moral and social habits of the people amongst whom they exist; how much greater results should we look for from the harmonious and united

labor of Christian nations gathered together from different parts of the earth, by their representatives, for the promotion of these objects.

We must bear in mind that the last three verses of the chapter express the events which give the supper its state of complete preparation. These are the taking of the beast and the false prophet, and casting them into the lake—burning with fire and brimstone, and killing the remnant, or the kings of the earth with the sword. But these events are to be brought about by *means*, which are chiefly the spread of the gospel, and whatever is calculated to open the way for it.

Such means are those now under consideration. They give to the present age its peculiar adaptation to produce the signs referred to in the above-mentioned verses.

The "World's Peace Convention," held in England, with whose zealous people the idea originated, some four or five years ago, was something novel as a means of impressing Christianity upon the world. The proposal to hold such a convention was promptly responded to by the churches of this and other Protestant countries.

It is true that the convention, so far as outward appearances indicated its effects, did not produce any very striking results. Indeed the enemies of religion considered it an abortion, and exulted in its failure. But this is not the way to judge of the success of great moral revolutions.

Providence often moves in the accomplishment of great results, with very slow steps ; and the means which in the end prove most effectual, are often in the beginning the least promising. This Peace Convention was one of the means which, in the aggregate, constituted this angel, and very likely it did all that it was necessary at that time should be done. It sowed the seed—it put the mind of the church in a train of thinking which was quite new to it. The old notion, too much entertained by men, that, because some Christians were not of their nation, they were not brethren, began to be discarded. This was one evidence of the growth of

the seed and of the good fruit it was destined to produce. It is still germinating and sending its roots deeper into the affections of Christians in various lands, producing a more generous and universal sentiment of good-will. But what do we now see, as another development of means auxiliary to the rapid extension of Christianity? at this very time* England is holding, in her great metropolis, a grand exhibition of human skill in the improvements in the mechanical arts, by the different nations of the world. She has opened a great field for noble rivalship in useful and ornamental works of art and genius. Will not this exert a great influence in banishing national antipathies, and removing prejudices, which owe their existence to nothing but ignorance of the mutual relations of men to each other?

When these honest men from different nations laid down their works of art and genius side by side, then looked each other in the face and grasped each other's hands with greetings of friendship, was not a new chord of feeling touched, and a nobler sentiment of fraternal sympathy awakened than ever had stirred in their hearts before? How the old antagonism of national and social prejudice must have melted down under the warm inspirations of that great Christian sentiment of universal brotherhood—*Peace on earth and good will to all men.* This was the great moral principle which arose out of this exhibition, and which diffused itself throughout the Crystal Palace, and went with the people when they separated and returned to their distant homes.

I very much doubt if this "World's Fair" would ever have been heard of if the "World's Peace Convention" had not been held previously. It is in this way that the great and wonderful plans of divine goodness are accomplished. One step leads on to another; one event gives rise to another, until the actors in the drama become amazed themselves at the wonderful results which have arisen so unexpectedly from

* 1851.

circumstances, which in their beginning never contempleted such results.

There was one striking circumstance connected with this world's exhibition worthy of particular notice, and which gives it a character suitable to the signs of the times. I allude to the solemn, religious service with which it was opened. When all things were arranged and ready for inspection, a solemn pause held the vast throng in deepest silence. The first act was to acknowledge the God of heaven as the common Father of all nations, without whose blessing the ingenuity and labor of man profiteth nothing.

England, in the person of her queen, reverently bowed before the Lord, and all the people bowed, while the Primate of England offered to the Most High the homage of assembled nations. Then the voice of the multitude broke forth, like the sound of many waters, and, mingling with the rich and solemn tones of great organs and other musical instruments, filled the Crystal Palace with hosannas to the God of all the earth.

Was not this a scene worthy of being held up in the midst of the greatest Protestant nation of the world, as a sign of the speedy overthrow of all the powers that opposed the progress of Christianity? What could be better calculated than this "Industrial Exhibition," conducted as it was, to unite different nations in one common feeling of brotherhood and Christian sympathy?

Let the Crystal Palace stand; let it remain to commemorate the epoch when the angel stood in the sun, and cried to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven to gather or prepare themselves for the supper of the Great God.

In another view of the subject this exhibition possesses an important character. It shows the absurdity of supposing that it was ever intended by the Author of Christianity that it should creep through the world in solitude and silence. The arts and sciences are her proper companions. In her

company they develop their growth and attain their greatest perfection with the most wonderful celerity.

To impose upon the Christian religion the solitude of the cloister, or to shut it up behind bars and bolts, and exclude it from the sympathies and enjoyments of social life, is mere superstition, and ignorantly aims to effect by a voluntary cruelty that which the grace of God alone can do. Where do we find the birth-place of great discoveries and improvements in the arts and sciences? Where did that wonder spring from which holds its mastery over the storms of the ocean, and walks in triumph over its billows?—and the still greater wonder, the magnetic telegraph, whence did it arise? These, with a thousand other discoveries and improvements in the mechanic arts, which follow each other in such rapid succession as to keep the world in perpetual astonishment, all owe their origin to those people where the *Protestant religion* invites the freest inquiry into her principles, and proclaims civil and religious liberty as the birthright of all men.

We now return to the vision. After the angel had announced the coming supper, and had invited all the fowls of heaven to gather themselves together to be prepared for it, the prophet gives us notice of the great events which will immediately precede it. They are embraced in the last three verses of the chapter, (19, 20, and 21,) and referred to as the signs of the last days of the gospel dispensation.

This combination of the beast and false prophet with the kings of the earth will, doubtless, be of a political character, and the object will be two-fold—first, to destroy the Protestant religion, and secondly, to check the progress of civil liberty.

I think it quite certain that the beast alluded to is the two-horned beast which came up out of the earth, (chapter xiii. verse 11.) The remarks on that chapter will show why the term *beast*, in that instance, is applied to an ecclesiastical power.

The temporal power of the Pope, though very much limited

and reduced to what it formerly was, is still acknowledged in Europe. He holds with other crowned heads the relation of a temporal prince as well as that of Roman Pontiff. His embassadors are received and honored at their courts, as their embassadors are received at the Court of Rome. Political and secular affairs are negotiated between Rome and other governments of Europe just as they are between other kingdoms. The term *beast*, therefore, is applicable to Rome, as she still holds the relation of a political power with the other governments of Europe.

From the relation given by the prophet of the circumstances and the result of this war, we must infer that it is the last effort that will be made against the Protestant religion ; and therefore it can have no reference to the measures that were employed for the same purpose by the woman, while she sat upon the scarlet-colored beast with seven heads and ten horns. Indeed the manner of this opposition is altogether different from that.

In the present instance, the beast, that is, Popery, in its temporal power, is represented as coalesceing—forming a league with the kings of the earth. The woman is not now sitting upon a great beast and overriding every opposing power ; or, to speak literally, the Church of Rome no longer commands the military force of a great empire to crush the growing power of the Reformation.

The Reformation has fixed the Protestant religion upon a throne which leaves it nothing to fear from violence and tyranny. This throne is the enlightened judgment and the firm attachment of the people. Other measures must now be devised—other weapons must be employed in the great conflict with the white horse army. Hence the beast and the kings of the earth enter into a league, and devise a system of political measures, with the plausible pretext of national regulations, necessary to protect the order and peace of their own governments, and hope by such means to accomplish that which they despair of effecting by the sword.

Protestantism has grown too mighty, and has spread itself too extensively, to be assailed now by the Inquisition, the rack, and the fire, which were the old-fashioned means of dealing with it.

The description the prophet gives of this league is exceedingly brief. He simply says, in the 19th verse: *I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army.*

We should suppose from this formidable power, that something of great consequence would be effected; and we anxiously inquire, what did the beast and the kings of the earth do? The prophet says nothing at all of what they did, and his silence implies clearly that they effected nothing; which amounts in fact to saying, that it is no longer in the power of man to arrest the progress of the Protestant religion amongst the kingdoms of the world.

The sequel of this great preparation by the beast and the kings of the earth is, that they were all taken. Like an army which proudly enters the field of battle fully equipped for the fight, but on seeing the overpowing force of the enemy it surrenders, lays down its arms, and becomes prisoners of war.

But let us inquire what measures these powers will be likely to adopt in their last efforts to arrest the march of Protestantism. What I shall say upon this point is merely conjectural, as it relates to events yet future; fifty years hence may make it history.

It is saying nothing more of the Romish Church than is admitted on all hands to be true—that she is the ever-watchful adversary of the Protestant religion, and that her own powers, as well as all the other powers that she can draw into her service, have ever been, and will continue to be, employed in efforts to destroy it.

France, as she was the first, in the coronation oath of Charlemagne, to give the great sword to the support of Po-

pery, so she will be the last to refuse her aid in the defence of that religion. Not that France cares a fig about the religion of Rome, any more than she cares about the Protestant religion ; but from the long habit of using the great sword for the interests of Popery, she could not be quite contented to see that religion in difficulties without espousing its cause. Besides, there seems to be something just suited to the gallantry and the prestige of the French nation, to be *for*, instead of *against* the *mistress* of the world !—the woman, whose golden cup contains so much that is exactly adapted to the infidel and lascivious tastes of that nation.

France, we may readily suppose, will be in the lead in the combined army of the beast and the kings of the earth. Her erratic and accommodating genius will suggest suitable measures and plans of operation. She may propose to the kings in league with her the creation of a great infidel empire, or such an atheistical power as will accord with the sentiments of her first revolutionary convention, and establish such regulations as will render it impossible for the subjects of Protestant nations to live in any of the kingdoms embraced by that empire, as Louis XIV. did with respect to his own Protestant subjects, the Huguenots.

Publications of a religious character, intended to expose the errors of the Romish Church, and show the consistency and truth of the Protestant religion, will be excluded from this empire, as the Protestant Bible now is from Rome and other parts of Italy. Even commercial intercourse with Protestant nations may become difficult, if it does not entirely cease, under the rigorous exactions of the infidel empire. Measures which, of themselves, are not ostensibly aimed against the progress of Protestantism, will, nevertheless, bring about others more distinctly marked with that peculiarity.

Austria will be a conspicuous power in this league. From Austria no one would expect to see any measures either of a liberal or intelligent policy. Her bigotry, ignorance, and

cruelty, make her a proper tool for the purposes of Rome. Then there is Spain and Portugal, too, once as much distinguished for the terror and agonies of the inquisition, the special instrument of their persecution of Christianity, as they are now for the imbecility and poverty of their superannuated governments. These kingdoms, with the dregs of their feeble nationality, will readily bring the little remaining power they may have to aid the means of checking Protestantism. Besides these, there are other powers of inferior rank and extent of dominion, scattered amongst the greater kingdoms of Europe, which will unite in the same effort.

Russia has no particular religious affinities with the rest of Europe. On that subject she stands up in her own mountain strength, isolated and indifferent. She fights no battles either for or against religion of any name. The whole scope of her policy is to keep up a balance of power which will best secure her own political aggrandizement.

Protestantism has nothing to apprehend from Russia. She backs up the great northern wilds of Europe, and is reserved for some great work in the purpose of Divine Providence, which, for the present, does not lie within the reach of political forecast to discover. But I will venture, however, a conjecture, and that is, that Russia will be the principal, if not the only power, that will break open the highway for the return of the Jews. When she crosses the Balkan Mountains again, the great Euphrates will be dried up, and the way of the kings of the East (the Jews) will be prepared.

The progress of political light must necessarily be very slow in Russia. Her subjects are scattered over almost interminable plains and inaccessable wilds. No system for improving their condition can operate otherwise than very slowly. But Russia has her statesmen and her merchants, who have free intercourse with the courts and commerce of Europe, and they compare very favorably with men of the same rank and pursuit in the most refined nations. And there seems to be no reason to doubt, that as fast as the circumstances and

condition of her people can be made subject to measures of general improvement, such measures will be promptly provided. It is quite certain that no monarch in Europe takes more interest in the great improvements of the age, or pays with more profuse liberality to secure the benefits of them to his own people, than the Emperor Nicholas does.

But this is a digression. Let us now return to the beast and the kings of the earth who are associated with him. I have said that this supposed league will not attempt to accomplish its work by the sword. Any direct attempt to suppress religious freedom in this way, would meet with no favor from public sentiment in the enlightened day to which this vision points.

But whatever the means may be, they will, doubtless, originate with the beast. The secret springs which will put them in motion will be found in Rome—that lofty eminence of a false religion, from whose watch-towers the *little horn full of eyes*, described by Daniel, is unceasingly employed in watching the religious movements of all Protestant countries, and in adapting her counteracting policy to meet and defeat every effort that may promise to enlighten the Christian world and advance the interests of civil and religious liberty.

But the end of all those measures is a total defeat of their authors and the overthrow of their power. This is stated in the twentieth verse with respect to the beast and the false prophet. These were taken, and were both cast, alive, into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

The beast, I repeat, is popery in its temporal dominion—its distinct *political* existence amongst the kingdoms of the earth. This dominion will be taken away, and the papal government, as a distinct political power in Europe, will cease to be.

This temporal power of the Pope has ever been the bulwark of his religious power ; and when the first falls, or is taken, as the text says, the latter, or his spiritual power, will be deprived of its principal source of vitality.

But still there is one great auxiliary which has powerfully sustained the authority of the Pope throughout the world—namely, the false prophet, that wrought *miracles*, by which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshiped his image. By those miracles the false prophet had greatly contributed to keep up the delusions of popery, both in its political and religious character. And popery, as a religious system, might still retain a considerable amount of influence and authority, even after the loss of its temporal power, provided it could continue to receive the support of the false prophet. But the false prophet is taken, too, as well as the beast ; so that nothing remains to popery but its simple *ecclesiastic form.*

I have explained before what I suppose to be meant by the *false prophet.* I suppose this allusion to be to the powerful and influential society of Jesuits.

Their superior learning, and familiar acquaintance with those higher branches of science, but little understood, even by men of noble birth and high political standing, in the early days of the Reformation ; combined with their devotion to the Romish Church, placed the education and training of the youthful mind almost exclusively under their guidance. Besides this, they were generally about the courts of kings, and on every suitable occasion, they would make such displays of their superior learning and knowledge as to astonish both the court and the people. Nothing more, I apprehend, is meant by working miracles, than the amazement and wonder produced by these exhibitions of their superior learning, which gave them great influence over people of every rank and condition.

These men, like Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses and Aaron in Egypt, deceiving the people of that day by their pretended miracles, have withstood the Protestant religion by the same means, although it came, like Moses and Aaron, to deliver the people from the bondage of an idolatrous religion.

Both *the beast and the false prophet were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

This singular expression—being cast *alive* into this lake, can only signify that their religion was an *incurable evil!* so utterly opposed and callous to all the gospel remedies as to be beyond the reach of recovery, and they were, therefore, hopelessly doomed to destruction.

The case of the beast and the false prophet has a remarkable parallel in the history of the three men who raised rebellion in the Israelitish camp: Korah, Dathan and Abiram. These men would not be subdued and reformed, by either the mild means, or the threatened judgments of heaven, addressed to them by Moses, but perversely persisted in their opposition to the divinely-appointed regulations, until the earth opened her mouth, and they, with their guilty adherents, went down *alive* into the pit.

The lake of fire and brimstone is figuratively used to signify a state or condition of agony—indescribable torment. We find it in common use with our Lord and his apostles, when they would convey the idea of extreme wretchedness.

The beast and false prophet are represented as being thrown into such a state *alive!* living or existing in such a condition of agony, as is expressed in a previous chapter, by gnawing the tongue with anguish. This state has no reference to corporeal or physical sufferings.

The inquiry is natural: what will produce this state of anguish? I answer, the chagrin and mortification of their overthrow. The beast that once lorded it over the kings of the earth, is now degraded, cast down, and stript of his power and influence; and, in short, has become a by-word and reproach amongst the nations. The great merchants of the earth we have seen in the preceding chapter, were thrown into the greatest grief because no man buyeth their merchandise any more. The whole system of popish religion becomes worthless in the eyes of men, and is looked upon with scorn and derision. The laborious husbandman will not

then be compelled to pay the priest for the privilege of drinking the milk and eating the butter which he gets from his own kine ;—nor will the people from the four quarters of the earth depend upon the sanction of one man in Rome to be allowed to use *a little fat* in preparing their daily meals. Such things are now regarded, most conscientiously, as sacred duties, by the great mass of the Romish Church, and they, no doubt, act from principle. But when the beast is taken, these absurdities will be so obvious, that, instead of being venerated as religious obligations, the people will be astonished that men could ever have been so blinded as to connect them at all with matters of religion.

The intimate connection subsisting between the beast and the false prophet will make their fate identical. The great influence which the Jesuits have had with the governments of the earth, will be lost, they will be discarded by the kings, and driven from country to country, and only allowed to dwell anywhere, under the most stringent laws, imposed upon them to prevent the propagation of their principles. This has been precisely the treatment they have received from several of the governments in Europe, to guard against what was supposed the dangerous consequences of their peculiar politico-religious principles.

Such a reverse as this in the affairs of that learned body would necessarily inflict the keenest anguish upon their minds. And all this is done by the progress of the gospel—*it* has thrown these two opposing powers into this lake, which will give their future existence the mortification of being discarded and despised. This is the fire and brimstone with which that lake burns.

The sixteenth chapter contains the scenes of this vision, in part, under the sixth vial. There, this effort to resist the power of the Protestant religion, is said to have been produced by unclean spirits which came out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the

mouth of the false prophet. But the *result* is given in the nineteenth chapter.

But the remnant—that is, the kings of the earth who had been led into this alliance, by those three-fold influences, with the beast and the false prophet, were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth—meaning the gospel now preached amongst the nations generally.

Those kings, or rather the people over whom they rule, will imbibe the light and influence of the gospel to such an extent, that, if the kings themselves do not embrace it, yet they will find it necessary to pause in their opposition to it, and to grant to their subjects the fullest enjoyment of religious liberty.

In this manner they will be slain with the gospel sword, their opposition will be neutralized, and they will dissever their alliance with the beast and false prophet. This will fully prepare the great supper, and all the fowls will be filled with their flesh.

Protestantism, in Europe, has battled with the powers of religious and civil despotism for the last half century with constantly-increasing success ; while the United States of America also entered the field, wielding, with wonderful effect, the weapon of her prosperous and happy republican government, and the right, secured to all, of a free and unrestrained enjoyment of religious opinions and worship.

The influence of this country has been felt in Europe most sensibly, and one of the effects of it is strikingly exhibited in the emigration, which is every year pouring vast multitudes upon our shores from all the countries of Europe.

In this way millions will be brought under the benignant influence of the gospel who were denied the liberty of hearing its voice of mercy in their own land, and their children will grow up in the midst of light which their fathers never saw.

But the events which strike most directly at the power of

the beast and the false prophet on this continent, have transpired within a few years only.

In order to a proper idea of the extent of that power, we must look at the religious condition of all South America, from Mexico to Cape Horn.

Leaving their despotic, distracted, and self-devouring political governments out of the question, what is their religious state but a vast mass of putrid morality, constantly sending up an insufferable stench, as offensive to the purity of Heaven as it is debasing to the character of man.

Every candid man, no matter of what religion, who has paid the least attention to the religious state of South America, must admit that this picture of it is not too strongly colored. A late traveler in that country (Stephens) gives in his book, without intending to write the history of its religion, a picture no less dark and disgusting.

The padres, who rule the uncultivated and ignorant population, are utterly incapable of elevating the moral character of the people, because they are themselves ignorant of the religion which alone can exalt and improve the corrupt nature of man.

Walled in, as the people of South America are, by superstition, bigotry, and despotism, and ready at any time to use violent measures towards those who dare to oppose their religion, what possible chance would there be of ever reaching them by means of religious efforts? Missionaries would not be allowed to exist amongst them. A mightier power, springing out of the combined influence of civil government with religious effort, is necessary to meet the moral state of society as it exists in South America.

Without regarding at all the motives which influenced politicians in bringing about events that have changed the relations of the United States and Mexico so materially, it does seem quite providential that Texas was wrested from the power of Mexico.

Texas was not seized upon and torn from the dominion of

Mexico, by the government of the United States. There was no crusade got up for the conquest of Mexican territory. It was rather the work of private, or individual enterprise. But so it was, Texas was cut off from amongst the ill-governed and impoverished provinces of Mexico, and subsequently became a free Protestant state, and is now giving the strongest evidence in her prosperity and rising greatness, in the physical and moral improvement that always follows the introduction of that religion into a country which had before been under the benighted and thriftless dominion of the beast and the false prophet.

The annexation of Texas led to the war with Mexico; and this resulted in throwing open the South American continent to the spread of the Protestant religion, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean.

The territory of the United States, stretching through the very heart of this, little better than pagan country, will introduce such impr wements in arts and agriculture, as well as in government and religion, as will change the whole face of the country, and will greatly improve the civil and social condition of the people.

But, in the eye of Christianity, the most important results of these political changes, is seen in the acquisition of a great central position for missionary operations.

San Francisco is this position ; while its inland trade will reach over all Mexico and its neighboring provinces, its vast commerce is destined to traverse the whole Pacific, and open a way to the benighted nations of Asia. The Christian philanthropist looks to California as the seat of a great missionary temple, whose base will cover all the newly-acquired country, and from its lofty towers will blaze the beacon lights of the Protestant religion, shining over all South America, and the islands of the Pacific, and reaching the distant shores of Asia, it will illumine the idolatrous regions of that benighted continent.

The people have gone to work as though they understood

all about the great result which is to be achieved. They dig gold and build churches; they enlarge the sphere of civil government, and spread the light of the Protestant religion. And, by means of tracts and Bibles, and preaching the word, San Francisco will soon resemble Jerusalem of old, where every one, no matter what country he came from, or what language he spoke, heard, *in his own tongue*, the wonderful works of God.

The art of printing speaks in all languages; it talks with all people in their own tongue, and may be said to effect by its own simple forms, all that was effected by the miraculous gift of tongues in the hearing of the people of all nations in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This is the angel we have already been introduced to by the prophet, of whom he tells us, *the earth was lightened with his glory.*

### THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

The gospel day is adapted to man in his pupilage—it is suited to the weakness of his moral perceptions. The Jewish economy was but a system of types and shadows; and when that had served its foreshadowing purpose and fell to pieces, men were brought under the Christian economy, the school of Christ, in which they were to learn, and become practically acquainted with those truths of divine revelation, which were only referred to under the Jewish economy by misty types and shadows.

As learners in this school, and possessing but very little moral capacity and perception, much forbearance, much tenderness and indulgence were necessary. But this treatment would be as much out of place with men when they have acquired a strength and maturity in their moral powers, as harshness and severity would have been in the incipient stage of their instruction.

The day of judgment will be no less a part of the divine government over men upon earth, than the day of gospel

grace is. In each the divine economy is employed in perfect ing the judgment-day purposes of God towards man. The two periods, however, differ widely in the mode of administering the divine government.

The gospel day is the exhibition of *grace*, almost without limit. The language of St. Paul (Rom. iii.) is: *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

Now hear what our Savior says, (Matthew xii.): *But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. By the deeds of the law* men will *then* be justified.

Evidently, here are *two* dispensations, widely different in their manner of dealing with men. The first superabounds in mercy and grace, while the second requires of man the most rigid accountability for his every act, and makes his acceptance with God to depend upon a strict conformity of his whole life to the rigid requirements of the *law* of God.

These two principles in the divine government, differing so widely in their application to men, can never be reconciled but upon the ground of two different dispensations; and this I understand our Lord to mean: *It is in the day of judgment that men shall give account for every idle word they shall then speak.*

The sayings of our Lord and his apostles on the subject of the judgment day, are innumerable, and there is also frequent reference to it in the old testament prophets. I shall present only a few of these sayings, with a view to establish the general character of that day. But, in the first place, let us look at those texts that refer to the close of the gospel day.

The broad and unequivocal declaration of Christ to that effect has been already quoted ; it is this : *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.* The end referred to is the end of the gospel, the cessation of gospel means as they are now known and experienced ; these will be no longer experienced when that end comes.

The parable of the ten virgins shows the end of the gospel day. While the foolish virgins went to replenish their vessels with oil, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage—*and the door was shut.* Agreeing with this parable is that saying of our Lord, on another occasion : *When the master of the house has risen up and hath shut to the door.* Thus showing that there will be an end of the gospel dispensation during the present life, and that the dispensation which will follow it, will present no such abounding mercy and grace as that which distinguishes the gospel day.

This view is further confirmed in what Christ said in reference to the judgment period : *In that day ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but ye shall not see it.* The days of the Son of Man it is well understood signify the gospel days.

The revelation that God has made to man, teaches him, that after the present dispensation closes, the judgment day commences, and that man's existence in this world will be continued throughout that day, as it is now, without any other change than that which will be produced by the difference in the mode of divine government, as above stated.

This judgment day will probably be of shorter duration than the gospel day. It will be employed in removing and clearing away all that is corrupt, and which unfits man for the kingdom of God ; that great and ultimate end of all the dispensations of the divine government over man.

We cannot fail to see that this will be the design of the

rigid and severe government of that period, if we pay attention to the sayings of Christ in relation to it.

The great portion of mankind which will be found enemies to God when that day comes, and the tares which have grown up with the wheat, will then be separated and disposed of by other means than those now employed in the gospel dispensation. The present means are of a merciful and forbearing nature ; they beseech men to become reconciled to God, and be saved ; but they have not succeeded in reclaiming mankind entirely, nor in preventing the growth of pernicious errors even amongst churches, organized expressly to aid in evangelizing the world.

Christ's kingdom will then be no longer the kingdom of grace, dispensing its requirements under the mild, persuasive mercy of the gospel, but it will be changed into a kingdom of stern *law*, in which judgment is executed rigorously upon nations and individuals, when the secrets of all hearts are made known, and the hidden things of dishonesty will be brought to light. These texts are intended to show that such will be the close and searching scrutiny of the divine government into every man's character, that it will be impossible for men, by any means of deceit or hypocrisy, to elude the decisions or judgments of that day, which will make every man known, even in his private works ; for the searching fire of the judgments of that day will reveal his true character.

The effect of this judgment will distinguish the wicked from the good, and exalt the nations that walk in the law of the Lord, or who had received and embraced the gospel of Christ, to dignity and honor, whilst those who had rejected it will be marked in some conspicuous manner by the displeasure of the Judge ; so that it will be manifest to all the world who are the righteous and who are the wicked amongst those nations.

The Christianity of the gospel day, in its different denominational forms, abounds with tares, all of which are to be removed. Christianity itself did not produce these tares ; they were mingled with the good seed, our Savior says, by an

enemy, and whilst men slept. These tares grew up, it is worthy of remark, during the *gospel dispensation*, and it is obvious that it requires other means—a different administration of the divine government—to rid the Christian field of them.

The parable on the subject of tares (xiii. chap. of Matthew) shows conclusively that there are errors which have become so intertwined with Christianity, that the means necessary to their removal cannot be employed in the present day without producing an injurious effect upon Christianity itself. Therefore, Christ said, let both grow together until the end of the world, the end of the gospel economy, lest if ye *now* attempt to gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

We see from this, that this end spoken of is that time when the gospel, in its present aspect, will no longer be preached amongst the nations, and the judgment day, or age, will commence ; during which day, the means necessary effectually to remove the tares will take the place of the gospel.

In explaining this parable our Lord says : *As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels,* [means properly adapted to the work,] *and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity.*

The parable of the net which was cast into the sea has reference to the same thing. This net gathered of every kind, and, when full, they drew it to the shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. The gospel net has gathered up a great variety of Christian systems, good and bad, which can only be purged and brought to the purity of the Christian standard by the process through which they will be carried in the judgment day.

Nothing is said which more fully explains the mode of the divine government in the judgment day than what Christ says : *The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they*

*shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity.*

The proper means employed to effect any particular end in carrying on the government of God over men are denominated angels, and the means here referred to are probably the prompt enforcement of the penalties of the divine law upon all transgressions, not at some indefinitely-remote period, but simultaneously with the act of transgression, like the Adamic law—*in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Men, in the present dispensation, sin with apparent impunity ; they are careless, and regard the threatenings of God's word with indifference. The punishment for disobedience is far off, in their thoughts, and *because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**

But suppose every act of wickedness should receive its just punishment at the time of its perpetration, would not men be afraid to trifle with God's law as they now do ? And would not all things that offend against purity and holiness be speedily laid aside ? This, I suppose, will be the mode of separating the tares from amongst the wheat, and removing all things that offend out of the kingdom of Christ in the judgment day.

St. Paul, in his discourse before the learned Athenians, speaks of this day and its peculiar government in terms which plainly show that it is connected with man's earthly existence. *Because* (says the apostle) *he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Judging the world in righteousness, is synonymous with *governing* the world in righteousness. Judging Israel, was the common phrase used to express the act of governing

* Ecclesiastes, viii. chap. 11 verse.

Israel in the time of the judges. The word *judged,* is frequently used in this sense, as well as in the sense implying defense, protection, and maintaining the rights of the oppressed. Indeed there is hardly any word in Scripture which has a greater variety of significations in its use than the word judgment.

This governing the world in righteousness by Christ Jesus, will bring out in grand relief before the whole intelligent creation, the glorious designs of the Creator in connecting this earth, and man as its lord and inhabitant, with his vast universe.

What just conception can be entertained of the design of God in creating this world, from what we see in its present and past government by men? We behold little else than ambition, oppression, injustice, selfishness, and cruelty—personal aggrandizement, sought at the expense of truth and virtue. None can suppose that it was for such ends as these that God created this world and placed man over it. But when it comes to be governed in righteousness by Christ, whom God has appointed for that purpose, then men will see and better understand the great designs of the Creator. They will then, with admiring angels, exult in beholding the harmony, the beauty, and the glory, which will continually shine forth from the grandeur and magnificence of the universe which God has created. Nothing will occur to mar the physical beauty, the moral grandeur, and the peace and purity of the world, in the day of that righteous government. But, before that happy day arrives, the judgment day has to do its work of preparation for it. Let us attend to some of the sayings of the apostles relative to the judgment dispensation.

From what both Christ and his apostles have said respecting that day, it is quite clear that it will be a period in which the religious principles of Christians will experience the severest trial; for all things that offend against the perfect law of the Lord, every obliquity will be visited upon men,

while all who openly and presumptuously do iniquity will be taken out of Christ's kingdom.

St. Peter dwells upon this, with particular emphasis, in the fourth chapter of his First Epistle, in which, after much exhortation, in a general way, he says: *But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.* Peter had learned from the teachings of his Divine Master that the gospel day would have an end, and that it would be succeeded by a period of severe trial to Christians and all the world. He adds, after the warning given of this great change in the moral government of the world: *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened to you. For the time is come* [the rendering would have been more consistent if the translators had given the reading, *is to*, or *will come*] *that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it begin at us,* [meaning the Church of God,] *what will the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*

If any one supposes that St. Peter was speaking of the terrible persecutions which fell upon the Christians in Pagan Rome, let them explain, if they can, where and how, the same power that brought these fiery trials upon Christians, afterwards punished with equal or greater severity, *them that obeyed not the gospel of God.*

That it would be more consistent to read the text: For the time *will* come, or is to come; is very apparent, from the previous part of the chapter, in which the apostle speaks of this day of fiery trial as *prospective*—yet to come; and particularly the 1st chap.: 7 verse. The end of all things is announced, then follows these fiery trials. When St. Peter speaks of these judgments beginning at *us;* as though he was to be a subject of them himself, it is evident he means the Church of God, by the term *us.* St. Peter has been dead these seventeen hundred years and more, but the end of all things, which he spoke of, is not come yet!

St. Paul is speaking of the same time when he refers to

the trials to which that day will subject every man's work. (1 Corinthians, 11 chap. 13 verse): *Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.* St. Paul speaks of all this as something future. This day of St. Paul, which is to try every man's work by fire, is the same day referred to by St. Peter, as a time of fiery trial, and they both mean the judgment dispensation which is to follow the gospel dispensation.

Let us now proceed to notice objections, which I am sure will be made to this theory of the judgment day—objections which bring with them the force of long-established opinions amongst good men, as well as the authority and weight of great names.

It will be objected to this mode of explaining the day of judgment, "That it deprives that day of the awful pomp and "grandeur with which the commonly-received opinion of "Christians has always invested it—that it does away with "the assembled millions of earth's inhabitants, from Adam "down to the last-born amongst men, all of whom we sup-"posed would stand before the bar of God, in solemn silence, "to receive the sentence of approval or condemnation of the "Omniscient Judge."

This is the popular opinion on this subject, and poets have embellished it with their various fancies ; giving it as many features and forms as their different tastes might suggest.

But I do not regard poetry as of any authority on a subject like this. The attributes of God and the revelation He has given to man, of the purposes and mode of his government, are a safer guide.

The common opinion of the day of judgment looks to it as the period when sentence will be pronounced upon all men, both saint and sinner, which is to introduce the former into the felicities of heaven, and consign the latter into the torments of hell!

But I doubt whether any experimental Christian, who

lives in the enjoyment of the consciousness of God's favor, and whose hopes of future happiness are supported by a gospel faith, ever entertains this opinion as a religious conviction, of the scene through which he shall pass after death.

What is the hope of such a Christian? What his firm belief? Why, that the death of the body releases him from the sorrows of this life, and lets him into the joys of his Lord. His last words, as he sinks in death, are, not that he is going to a *judgment bar*, but that he is going to the joys of *heaven!* and his happiness, at that moment of his departure from the world, is often expressed by those words, as they fall from his dying lips—

"Angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come!"

The question is in place: in view of the common opinion of the judgment, will the righteous who have departed this life, in all ages since the days of Adam, and have gone to their rest in heaven, have their state of happiness interrupted and be called away from the society of God and angels, to stand before a judgment bar, to await the sentence of the Judge, which is to entitle them to eternal life? Can such a view of the judgment be consistent with the justice and omniscience of God?

And of the wicked, it may also be inquired: will their state of punishment be suspended while they are brought before the same bar with the righteous, to receive the sentence which is to doom them to everlasting woe? What mind, enlightened by the Christian Scriptures, can seriously entertain opinions such as these? ascribing to the infinitely holy and all-wise God, a procedure in his government, which would discredit the imperfect wisdom of frail men!

But to escape from the inconsistency of such a plan of the judgment day, some tell us that the righteous and the wicked do not enter upon their respective states of felicity and woe when they die; but they occupy some intermediate place in the universe, neither of happiness or woe, where they await

the sentence of the final judgment ! It is unecessary to say anything more in answer to this opinion than to refer it to the parable of *Lazarus* and the *rich man.* In the presence of that parable, uttered by our Lord himself, it stands rebuked and reprobated.

But, it will be asked, as this view of the judgment day limits its proceedings to the people and nations who live in that time ; how is it to be reconciled to the following texts in the writings of St. Paul : *For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* Rom. xiv. *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* 2 Cor., 5 chap.

From these, and other texts of a similar character, the common opinion has arisen of a future judgment of all the human family at one time, particularly the text which says : *It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* It might be a sufficient refutation of the inference drawn from these texts, to urge, that Christ speaks of no other judgment than that which gathers the nations of the earth before him at his appearing. But I think the sayings of St. Paul are susceptible of an explanation which will reconcile them with this opinion of the judgment ; or, at least will show that they do not contradict it.

In referring all these scriptures which seem to imply the act of judgment, or the conferring rewards and punishments, to some period after death, in another world, the gospel system appears to be quite forgotten ; or, at least to be regarded as presenting no present rewards or punishments ; that God does not either reward or punish men in this life. Now, no one can look into the history of the Jewish nation, without being forcibly struck with the frequent exhibitions of divine judgment upon that people, when their iniquities provoked the displeasure of the Almighty.

*I will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to*

*the third and fourth generation of them that hate me*, is an established principle of divine government over man, and it is not likely that the punishments here spoken of are to be looked for in the next world. Indeed the whole economy of the old testament scriptures stands upon the ground of punishment for transgression *in the present world*, and treats of the judgments of God as designed to *prevent* the transgressions of men : *When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*, was the doctrine taught by Isaiah. And can the Christian system be less perfect in its adaptation to the ends of divine government than the Jewish system was ? It is true that the Christian code breathes mercy, long-suffering, much forbearance with the ungodly ; but still, it would be greatly misconceiving it, to suppose that it proposes no present punishments for the obstinate and persevering violation of its laws.

The gospel system, or, as it is likewise called, the kingdom of heaven, has its *laws ;* and it administers rewards and punishments, in a modified sense, suited to its forbearing spirit ; while it at the same time points to a higher and and more glorious state of the righteous, and a deeper condemnation of the ungodly in the next life.

In order to a proper understanding of the apostle's meaning in the texts before us, we must take a comprehensive view of the gospel system in its operations and designs.

The gospel economy is a spiritual kingdom or moral government over mankind, having all the laws necessary to its object, and enforcing them by the application of such rewards and punishments in the *present life* as are suited to its great end, which is to train men for a higher and purer state of intellectual and moral existence hereafter.

The laws of this kingdom, which are its doctrines and teachings, have been settled and established by Christ, who is the head of it. All rules of duty, as subjects of civil as well as religious government, are there laid down, and it is to the laws of this kingdom that Christians are to refer all

questions of right or wrong, and they must conform to the decisions of those laws, or suffer the punishment connected with their neglect.

In this sense, I consider the gospel system to be *the judgment seat of Christ, or the bar of Christ*, referred to by the apostles, before which we, as Christians, must all stand or appear.

Our faith and practice must be subjected to the judgments or decisions of this bar, and we are either justified by them or we are condemned.

How singular it would appear if the gospel system, designed to *discipline* men, should present no considerations of a chastening nature, which all admit to be necessary to man in his present state. *Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* Now, this chastening must be necessary for the things *done in the body*—that is, done in the present time. I consider these texts, in the Epistle to the Romans and the 2 Cor., as referring to the exercise of the divine government, through and by the gospel as an instrumentality. Its laws are in constant course of administration, in rewarding the faithful follower of his Lord, and in visiting with God's displeasure the unrighteous, in such ways as are suited to the life of man in this present world. The language of the apostle, I think, is quite in favor of this view of his texts, where he speaks of the bar and the judgment seat of Christ.

Christians, in that early day of the gospel, frequently fell into sharp controversies about non-essentials. The old Jewish canon, for a long time, worked itself into the Christian Church, and gave much trouble respecting the use of meats and the observance of days. The apostle, in order to quiet these dissensions, and to impress upon Christians that their duties were not to be learned from Jewish rites and ceremonies, but from the law of Christ, says to them : *But why dost thou judge thy brother ? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother ? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

As if he had said the right or the wrong in all matters of duty must be decided with us Christians by the law which Christ has given us. It is not to one another, nor to the law of Jewish ceremonies, that we are accountable, but to the law of Christ. Let us not, therefore, *judge* one another any more. The law of Christ, as it is taught us in his gospel, is the standard of our faith and duty. Before that we must all be judged, and by its decisions our opinions and our acts must stand or fall. This, I believe, is what the apostle means by appearing before the judgment bar of Christ. And, as if further to impress Christians with the truth, that they are constantly under the approval or condemnation of the judgment of this bar, the apostle says: *The Word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts: neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* This is a judgment bar, before which the very thoughts and intents of the heart are constantly judged, and are either approved or condemned according as they are good or evil. Before this judgment seat of Christ we all do now appear, and by its righteous decisions we are acquitted or condemned. No doubt that in this life the disciplinary judgments of heaven are employed in restraining and correcting Christians as well as the ungodly.

But the 9th chapter, 27th verse of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is regarded as being conclusive on this subject, and places a judgment of all men at one time, in a future state, beyond doubt.

The text reads: *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, (but after that judgment,) so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,"* &c.

I think the apostle is here speaking of the judgment day in no other sense than that in which I have explained it. Let us attend to his words, in connection with the subject on which he is treating.

The subject of that chapter is the redemption which Christ

accomplished for the human family, and the likeness which he assumed to man, in his fallen state. He took upon him the iniquities of us all ; he took even the nature of man, sin only excepted, and became obedient unto *death.* In short he associated himself with man in his mortal condition, and died as man dies. It is appointed, or decreed, that man shall once die, and that the redemption may reach to the full extent of man's forfeit, Christ also died once—he became obedient to that law which required the life of man, in order to release man from the dominion of death, that the whole man, as a being of intellectual, moral and physical powers, might be recovered from the fall, and be reinstated in his original perfection and immortality.

But we do not yet see this redemption in its complete effects ; for man is still a subject of death, although his moral powers are renovated, and his spiritual nature is sanctified by grace.

The second branch of redemption, that is, the redemption of the body, is yet to come ; and that explains the latter clause of the 28th verse of the chapter ; *And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation*—full and complete salvation. He will not appear the second time to make any future atonement for sin, but to carry out and perfect the redemption made by the offering of himself *once* for the sins of the world.

Speaking of the future glory of the people of God, in the 8th chapter of Romans, the apostle says : *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now ; and, not only they, but ourselves, also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit ; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit : the redemption of our body.* This will perfect in man the salvation by the atonement of Christ, who will, at his second coming, *change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body ;* this is the

redemption of the body—that is, the physical nature of man will then be no longer subject to death—he will be an immortal being.

The judgment day, or dispensation, is a subject not incidentally noticed by the sacred writers, but has as great prominence given to it by them as the present or gospel dispensation has; and the apostle refers to it in these words: *but after this the judgment.* This sentence seems to be abrupt and without any previous connection with the previous train of reasoning, unless we understand it as referring to the *time* when the salvation of man shall be completed in the redemption of the body—then we shall see its application. The sentence is evidently introduced as a parenthesis, as we shall see by reading the argument of the apostle without it, from the 26th verse: *But now, once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die—so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

The apostle's argument is made more distinct without the sentence: *but after this the judgment.* For what purpose then did he introduce this sentence? for the sole purpose, as I suppose, of notifying the Christian world, that this redemption of the physical man from the power of death, by the second coming of Christ, would not take place immediately at the end of the gospel dispensation; for *after* this dispensation, comes *the judgment* dispensation. This is to intervene between the end of the gospel day and the second appearing of Christ. How important that judgment day is in the plans of divine government, will appear from our Lord's words, when he tells us: *In that day,* all that offends, and them that do iniquity, shall be taken out of his kingdom, all the tares that could not be separated from the growing wheat in the gospel day, will be gathered and burned. This is the judgment which will precede the second appearing of Christ, and it will prepare the church for this appearing, as the bride is prepared for

the bridegroom. This, I believe to be the true meaning of the apostle, by the sentence—*but after this the judgment*, or judgment day.

Of the moral government of God over men in that day, I think the apostle is speaking in the tenth chap. Hebrews, 26 and 27 verses : *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*

None can believe that the apostle intended to apply these words to the gospel dispensation. They are directly opposite to what he has said of that dispensation in all of his Epistles wherein he speaks of it.

In order to show that the apostle treats of two dispensations in the present state of man's existence, it is only necessary to refer to what he says of the present dispensation, and contrast it with the above passage.

In his Epistles to the Romans (v. chap.) he uses this language : *And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift. For the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.* By *one* act of sin condemnation came upon all ; but, under the free gift of grace and the abounding mercy of the gospel dispensation, pardon is extended to *many offences.* So says our Lord, when inculcating a spirit of forgiveness upon his disciples. Being asked by one, *Lord, how oft shall my brother sin and I forgive him ; until seven times?* Our Lord replied : *I say unto you, not seven times, but seventy times seven, if he repent, thou shalt forgive him.*

This is the mercy breathed upon man by the gospel dispensation. It follows him even after he has turned away from the truth, and it entreats and beseeches him to turn again and receive the free gift of pardon. Very different from this is the dispensation referred to by the apostle, when he says : *For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.*

One act of transgression ends the man's probation in *that* day, and when he falls from the truth, he falls under the judgment which devours the adversary. This is the day of judgment, and in this way it will differ from the gospel day.

But it will be asked, if the apostle addressed these truths to the Hebrews of his own time, how can they be understood as referring to some future state of man's probation ?

The apostles, as well as the prophets, wrote under divine inspiration, and they frequently utter sayings which have no application to the times in which they lived, although they were addressed to cotemporaries. If the writings of the apostles had reference only to their own times, every subsequent change in the condition of the political and social relations of men, and every new development of the purposes of Providence, would require a new revelation to direct Christians in their course of duty.

These Scriptures, which now point out the way of life to men, will also warn and instruct men on the judgment dispensation ; and this one text from the Hebrews is one instance of a great many in which the words of the apostle must be referred to another dispensation. The recognition of the day of judgment as another dispensation over man in the *present world*, differing from the gospel dispensation in respect to its laws and penalties, will make many of the sayings of our Lord, and his apostles and the prophets, plain, and easy to be understood, which, without such recognition, must ever remain obscure and unintelligible.

It is obvious from the whole tenor of Scripture that two different dispensations of divine government belong to the present state of man's earthly existence—the present, which is the gospel dispensation, in which *grace reigns*, and mercy abounds and extends its pardoning power to *many offences ;* and the future, or the judgment dispensation, in which the *law* of God demands a *perfect* obedience, on pain of the judgment and fiery indignation which will be visited upon every transgression. In the present state the principle of the di-

vine government is adapted to the feebleness of man's moral powers, and its requirement is, *believe* and thou shalt be saved; but the next state will be no less adapted to his stronger moral powers and its requirements then will be, *do this*, and live.

Amongst the many references to the future dispensation there is a remarkable one by our Lord, in speaking of the sin against the Holy Ghost. He says, *it hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.* A distinct reference is here made to a future dispensation ; for what can be the meaning of the word *world*, in relation to this subject, but a dispensation of divine law under one modification or another.

This declaration of our Lord furnishes the only instance in which the present dispensation resembles that one which is to succeed it. This sin *alone*, in the present dispensation, hath no forgiveness ; but in the next dispensation, or the judgment day, no willful transgression hath forgiveness : there will be no *sin-offering* for repeated transgression.

Christ compares this day to the night, in which none can work; and by the prophets it is spoken of as the day that shall burn as an oven, when the wicked shall be consumed as stubble ; and by the apostles it is called the day of judgment and *perdition* of ungodly men. But it will, nevertheless, be a day of *probation*, of moral trial ; and men who are saved in that dispensation will be saved by the atonement of Christ, just as they are now saved. But the means of grace, the spiritual helps, and, above all, the reclaiming mercy which now follows the apostate from God and his law, will not be known in that day. The judgment day will be, in comparison with the gospel day, what the night is to the day. Men who walk in the night have to use great caution to avoid making a false step, which might involve them in danger ; so in that day which if compared to the night, one false step, one act of willful apostasy from the truth, will ruin the man's moral condition forever. The fiery trials and the burning as an oven are

figures of speech intended to show the rigid conditions which will then be imposed upon men in working out their salvation; for it will then be with fear and trembling, because of the consuming judgments of God which will fall upon transgressors. God will then become, to all who are out of Christ, a *consuming fire.* Is this text applicable to the divine government in the *gospel* day, when his Spirit strives with man, and God waits to be gracious unto all the sons of men, even unto them who are out of Christ, and are far off by wicked works? The perdition of ungodly men is also a descriptive trait of that day. I understand this to mean that this judgment day will close the scheme of redemption—the whole probationary system will end with it. The perdition of ungodly men, signifies their final state, and the future government of God beyond that state will have no ungodly subjects, but will be a government over the righteous only. It will be the new heaven and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness alone, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. But this is going ahead of the subject. Something more remains to be said about the judgment period. This is the day which Christ says will come upon the world as a thief cometh in the night. *And as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

The world will pass from the day of gospel grace to the judgment day, as the natural day gradually declines into night, and so imperceptibly that men will hardly be conscious of the change until the daring acts of wickedness, and the increased frequency of the divine judgments in punishing the ungodly, will make them sensible of the change which has come over the moral condition of the world. Then they will discover that the gospel door, which had stood wide open to men, calling and inviting by all the means of the gospel system, is now shut. Then, in the words of our Lord, *they will begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, &c.* They will then anxiously desire those means which they once rejected and despised. They will long to see one of the days of the

Son of Man, but shall not see it. Those means and those days do not belong to the judgment state.

The reader will not fail to observe the frequent repetition of terms, in treating on this subject of the judgment. I am very sensible of it myself, but so desirous am I to make myself distinctly understood, and to divest my views of all ambiguity, that I would rather incur the censure of tautology, than that the plainest reader should not plainly comprehend my meaning. And, at the risk of being tedious, I must ask the reader's indulgence and attention to a few further remarks upon the subject.

The novelty of this view of the judgment day will very likely give rise to the following inquiry—" If the gospel is a " perfect system of salvation to men, why should it be changed " for another system having the same end in view? Does God " change? Will he lay aside his tender mercies and be- " come austere and vindictive in his government over man? " Why not continue the gospel plan with all its mercy and " grace?"

The answer to all this is: when the judgment day comes, man will have arrived, in the progress of his nature, to a condition of moral power and strength, far beyond that which he was in when the gospel system was introduced. And this improvement of his moral and intellectual condition is owing to the influence of the gospel. Light has been disseminated, and moral culture has brought out his own intellectual and moral powers. His restless spirit and ever-expanding intellect have produced in man a feeling of independence of all other power.

Both St. Paul and St. Peter give strongly-colored pictures of men under this spirit of moral and intellectual independence, in the last days. Men either become subjects of the saving power of God, or they reject it, and become, as the apostles described them: *Covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, de-*

*spisers of those that are good, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.* 2 Timothy, 3 chap.

St. Peter, also speaking of man in the last days, says: *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying: Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning.* Chap. 3.

From these texts it appears quite manifest, that a very great change will take place in men in the last days of the Christian dispensation; they will despise and dispute the word of God.

The whole moral structure of society having undergone such a change as this, the necessity of a change in the divine government to meet it, is too palpable either to be questioned or to be misunderstood. The change is not in God—but in man; and God, in his infinite wisdom, has appointed a dispensation adapted to the change in human society, called the day of judgment. The *law*, and its *penalties*, in place of the *gospel* and its *grace*, will then be the measure of the divine government over men; and it argues quite as much concern for man's happiness, to place him under the *law*, when his moral condition calls for that form of government, as it did to place him under the gospel when his feebler state required that peculiar dispensation of grace. Under the stricter dispensation of law, the tares which had grown up in the gospel field will all be gathered and burned, and all things that offend will be taken out of Christ's kingdom.

Whatever may be the severe and searching effects of this day upon the ungodly, it will be a time of joy and felicity with the righteous. The apostle teaches, that the state of the righteous in that judgment dispensation, will be better than it is in the gospel dispensation; for their distinction then will be unto glory and honor; and Christianity, in the life of its subjects, will be purer, as that day will separate from it the tares—the false doctrines, and all mixture of error in faith and practice, which now abound to the great

injury of the truth, and the disquiet of the meek and godly.

But it will be further asked, do not these views of the judg-day overthrow the scripture doctrine on that subject, and leave all men, both the righteous and the wicked, without any future judgment at all ?

I answer, they may overthrow the prevailing *opinion* of men as to what the scripture doctrine is respecting the judgment, but I humbly hope they do not oppose the doctrine taught by our Lord and his apostles.

As to a future judgment of mankind after death, in the way pointed out by the common opinion, it seems to me that enough has been said already. I will just add, however, one argument, which may serve to strengthen what I have before said on this point : If God is exercising a moral government over man, which now takes cognizance of all his acts, and even the secret purposes of his heart, and that under this government all men are now either approved or condemned before God, what end of the divine government is to be attained by renewing the judgment upon man's conduct in this life after he has gone into another state of existence ? "To justify the ways of God to man," some will answer, who have drawn their belief in a future judgment more from the sayings of poets than from the Word of God, "that the assembled world may at one time see, by one act, the justness and righteousness of God in consigning one portion of mankind to everlasting woe, and exalting the other portion to life eternal."

This is the only ground upon which the belief of a future judgment stands as to the necessity for such a procedure ; for no one will venture the assertion that the Almighty does not know as perfectly the merit and demerit of every man, at the time of his death, as it could be known by the forms and investigations of a judgment appointed for that purpose. If the judgment is a proceeding to *justify the ways of God* in the final disposition which he will make of all men, then it as-

sumes the character of a judgment to try the proceedings of the Almighty in his dealings with men. Is any Christian willing to hold his opinion of a future judgment under such a view of it as this? I hope not.

The great fundamental doctrine of the Bible is, that man, in his fallen state, is under sentence of condemnation already. In the sense in which the day of judgment is regarded, being that of a grand assize, man is condemned already. He is now under sentence of judgment, according to what St. Paul declares, in Rom. v. chap. 18 verse: *Therefore by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.* This sentence comprehends all men of every grade and condition in life. It is not spoken of as a condemnation which is to come upon man by a judgment after death, but as his actual present state, from which, if he fails to escape in this life, there is no hope or means of escape after death, as *there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*

This life is the only time in which man has opportunity to avail himself of the means of setting aside this judgment and relieving himself from its condemnation. These means are stated in the latter part of the verse above referred to: *Even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.* This is the atonement made by Christ for the sins of the world. By fearing God and working righteousness, the man sets aside the judgment, and relieves himself from its condemnation, as the apostle fully declares in these words: *There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* Those who receive the grace of God, and by an upright and holy life serve God, become partakers of the atonement, and have cancelled the judgment, and have passed from death unto life.

Now, as it is in this life that man is under judgment of condemnation, and as it is in this life only that he may set aside that judgment, and relieve himself from its condemnation, how say some, that the sentence of condemnation is to be

passed upon men in a day of judgment after death? If this is already done in this life, does it seem rational or consistent with the divine wisdom that there should be a day of judgment, such as is commonly supposed, after death?

Can it be objected to these views of the judgment day that they are likely to relax the diligence of men by removing the motive to a religious life, which the apprehension of a future judgment is supposed to inspire? So far from this being their effect, it seems to me that such views are rather calculated to increase the anxiety of men respecting their present state. Instead of pointing them to a judgment day beyond the present life as the period when they must give an account for all their doings in the presence of assembled worlds, if they were assured that the judgment of God is *now* upon them, and that at any hour this judgment may be executed by the hand of death, cutting them off forever from the possibility of salvation, all the interests of a man's future state would crowd themselves upon him in the *present* moment, and all the apprehensions that a *future* judgment are calculated to awaken would oppress his mind with an abiding present dread of the execution of a judgment which he knows is *now* standing against him in the book of the wrath of God against all unrighteousness of men.

The long space of time which men place between themselves and the day of judgment, as they consider it, is just the season which they determine to employ in seeking their own sinful pleasures. It is time enough yet, the day of judgment is a great way off! and, because they consider it so, and that there will be no judgment upon them until that day comes, their hearts are set within them to do evil. But if, in place of thus putting off the judgments of God to another world, and giving themselves no concern about them in the present life, men were convinced that they are *now* actually under the very sentence of condemnation which that imagined future judgment is expected to denounce against them, and that nothing but the brittle thread, upon which

life is suspended, and the fleeting breath in their nostrils, separates them from the fearful consequences of that judgment? Would they not be actuated by very different motives, and be led to greater diligence in seeking for and employing those means by which they may set aside the judgment that is now against them, and escape from its condemnation?

It is not supposed by those who hold the popular view of the judgment day, that the least variation is to be made in the moral character of any man that ever lived, by the proceeding of that judgment. Whatever the moral character of the man might have been in this life, that is precisely the character in which they say he is to stand before the bar of judgment.

Well, if there is no possibility of a change in the moral condition of men at that tribunal—and Christ has already distinctly announced what shall be the future destiny of all men according to their moral character in this world—the question is irresistible: what end will be accomplished by the forms and proceedings of such a judgment?

Having now given my views, as I honestly entertain them, respecting the day of judgment, I must say that the popular opinion of the church, as it is commonly expressed on that subject, is not warranted either by scripture or reason.

This judgment day, or dispensation, is the great and notable day of the Lord, so frequently spoken of by the Jewish prophets, and by Christ and his apostles. It is the day in which the floor of the Christian Church will be thoroughly purged, and the wheat will be gathered into the granary, but the chaff will be burnt up with unquenchable fire.

In short, it is the seventh trumpet age; when the dwellers upon the earth will realize all the fearful predictions of that day, which are uttered in the pathetic strains of Jeremiah, and glow in the burning visions of Isaiah, and are reflected from the lofty mirror of Ezekiel; or flow through the pro-

phetic strains of Judah's royal bard. All these will have their fulfillment in that great day of the Lord.

Christ, in the calm and holy dignity of his manner of speaking, warns the church of the approach of that day—his apostles urge to diligence and holy living, in view of its terrors and judgments—to its fearful and trying dispensations, which will overwhelm the ungodly murmurers, mockers, and scoffers of that time ; while St. Peter, in order to give an idea of the tremendous effects of the divine wrath, as it will be revealed from heaven in that day, represents the heavens and the earth as in a state of conflagration. And, our beloved prophet, with whom we have sojourned, beholding his wonderful visions, and listening to his prophetic voice, proclaiming the events of almost two thousand years ; now from the solitude of his banishment in Patmos, lifts up the wine-press, trodden by the angel of God, until the blood came out, even to the horse bridles, and cries: *This is the day of God Almighty's wrath.*

This is St. Peter's day of *fiery trial*, which will try every man's works. It is also the day which Malachi speaks of, *that shall burn as an oven. It is the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.* It will have its place in this world as the gospel day now has ; it will have to do with the people who will *then live in the earth*, and with no others.

The necessity for just such a day of fiery trial—of the exercise of inexorable *law ;* in short, such a day as the *wine-press* indicates, is made fully to appear from the character of the people of that day.

Men have read the Bible to very little purpose, if they have failed to discover that it speaks in the strongest terms of the bold daring and presumptuous wickedness of the men of the last days, or latter times of the world's history. It is not referring either to those degraded vices which are commonly the offspring of brutish ignorance, but it speaks of the wickedness of that day as something that assumes a position of

*defiance of God!* and impiously contradicts his word! In short, giving the lie to the whole of divine revelation.

The first five verses of St. Paul's second Epistle to Timothy, describes the last days thus: *This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves; covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce; despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, high-minded—lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*

St. Peter speaks of the state of morals generally, in the same days, in the last chapter of his Second Epistle: *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts; and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.* This is the statement which St. Peter makes of the scoffing infidels of the last days, who will deny that there had been, at any time, any such manifestations of divine wrath upon the earth as is threatened in the judgment day. Willingly, or choosing to be, ignorant of the deluge by which the world that was, being overflowed, perished.

Nothing can be conceived of, more depraved and desperate than this exhibition of human society in the last days. Civil and religious, as well as social obligations, are everywhere trampled upon, and scarcely anything is seen but the most alarming tumult and disorder. With mobish violence, the barriers which have been raised for the peace and safety of society, are torn down; the restraints of civil law are wantonly outraged—the ties which bind society in mutual confidence and good-will are severed, and trampled upon by vulgar violence. The force of law is destroyed by evil example and gross immorality—violence, tumult, and murder, everywhere alarm and distract society, and threaten the overthrow of all order and government.

In such a state of things, we shall look in vain for any reverence of God or respect for his religion ; scorn and contempt for both become general ! The Sabbath and all sacred institutions are scoffed at and shockingly desecrated, and even the youth vie with men of riper years in grossly profaning the name of God!

Such is the picture which the apostles have drawn of the moral condition of the world in the last days. Not of the hordes of barbarous men who never heard of God nor Christianity ; nor of the Heathen, whose religious light is very limited and doubtful ; but they speak of men who enjoy the blessings of the gospel—whose cup of divine mercy, as the Psalmist says : *runneth over, and amongst whom the paths of the Lord drop fatness.*

If these fearful instances of moral depravity were not something extraordinary—something beyond what had been common in the world—why should the inspired writers dwell upon them with so much emphasis ? They do present a moral condition of mankind requiring a different mode of treatment from that which the gospel pursues. The day of judgment, with its wine-press severity, is required to meet the evils of those last days. The voice of mercy, calling through the gospel, will not reach the men of these last times ; the voice of God's judgments alone can make any impression upon them. How necessary is it then that there should be such a dispensation as the *day of judgment.*

These outward signs of abounding iniquity will be accompanied, too, as our Savior has informed us, with marks of declension in the church ; because this flood of iniquity overspreads the earth, the love of many will wax cold. To limit this sign to a comparatively few individual cases of the apostasy of men from the religion which they once possessed, would be doing the text great injustice. I understand it to mean, that churches, to a considerable extent, will betray a lukewarm state, and in many instances total apostasy. The earnest zeal in their membership and ministry will be sensibly

abated, and instead of the pungent and powerful appeals which were once urged with so much success from the pulpit, little else will then be heard beside cold and chaffy dissertations, or loose and desultory declamation, designed more to gain applause than to save souls.

It will be very apparent that the ministration of the word fails to produce upon the community those sobering and saving effects which once attended its preaching ; so that as this *night* comes on, the light and life of the gospel day decline, even in the ministration of the word.

The Church is admonished that her faith and works will be put to a severe test by the fire which will try every man's works. In this way the wheat will be separated from the chaff, and all things that offend will be taken out of Christ's kingdom.

The manner in which this day will come upon the world is spoken of by our Lord, and refers to signs which will give indubitable evidence of its nigh approach. But I need not repeat those sayings, they are within the reach of all who read the Bible. But there is one passage in the writings of St. Paul, however, that is so appropriate that I will introduce it. In his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, (v. chap.,) the venerable apostle says : *But of these times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you ; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they* [that is, the ungodly world] *shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief : ye are all children of light, and the children of the day ; we are not of the night nor of darkness.*

Instead of the " midnight pomp and splendor" which poetry has given to the advent of this day of the Lord, the apostle tells us it will come as a thief in the night. The quiet and stealthy steps of the thief are not heard ; he creeps cautiously

and silently in his approaches, and we are not aware of his presence until we find him in possession of the house. So will the coming of the day of the Lord be to all who are not children of the light.

To the watchful and humble Christian who looks carefully upon the face of the moral world and watches the signs of the times, the approach of that day will be discernible. Others may see the same things that he sees, but they offer no suggestion to their worldly wisdom beyond what they call the common course of things—the ordinary events and changes which belong to the world.

But the Christian looks higher, and he discovers, by those spiritual perceptions which the Word of God has taught him, distinct and unequivocal tokens of some great moral revolution in the dispenstion of God's government in the church and the world.

This is in conformity with what our Lord says to the righteous who will witness the severe trials of the judgment day. *And take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass,* [viz., the fiery judgments of that day,] *and to stand before the Son of Man.*

This refers to no scene that was to transpire in the land of Judea by the Roman sword, but to one that is yet in the unseen future, which, when it comes, will bring with it a fearfulness and a failing of the stoutest hearts—a distress and perplexity of nations that will resemble the sea and its waves roaring, and will reach and shake all nations that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. But while all else is struck with dread and trepidation in the presence of the scenes of that day, the people of God will lift up their heads and rejoice; for the

time of their deliverance from all earthly sorrows and afflictions has come, and they stand before their Lord, in that day of burning trial, without fear and without reproach.

This seventh trumpet is called the trump of God, by way of distinction, as the events which will transpire in the day which it announces, will be manifestly under the appointment and direction of God himself. The temple will be filled with smoke, and no man will enter into the temple until the seven plagues are fulfilled.

No man, no human power, will originate or control the judgments of that day ; they will proceed from God, and will manifest his glory and power in a manner that will confound all human wisdom and overthrow all human power. This power and glory fill the temple, and exclude all inferior agencies. Here is the half-hour's silence of the seventh seal—the cloud now rests upon the Christian tabernacle, and God is heard speaking to his people, saying, *Stand still, and know that I am God ; I will be exalted in all the earth.* These judgments of the seven vials will convince men that God has taken to himself his great power, and will now hold man to a strict account for his every act and word.

Christians who now pray and labor for the salvation of their fellow-men, will have nothing of this kind to do in this great day of the Lord. Their appropriate employment then will be, as they are represented in the fifteenth chapter, standing upon the sea of glass, with the harps of God, singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb—reviewing and celebrating, in songs of triumph, the great and marvellous works of God in the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations, and concluding by saying, *for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are* [now] *made manifest.* These judgments will do all that the gospel and the prayers of God's people had failed to do.

The wine-press and the sea of glass mingled with fire are the prominent subjects which distinguish the day of judgment. The seven vials of that day represent seven periods,

in each of which there will appear some new form of judgment differing from that which preceded it. The whole will close with the great hail, which is represented as falling out of heaven upon men—the last and most universal, as well as the most appalling, of all the judgments of that great day of God Almighty's wrath.

That this judgment dispensation will bring men generally to submit themselves to God cannot be doubted. *When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*, is a truth too well understood in the experience of men to admit of any doubt. And as this period is called the day of judgment, for the very reason that the judgments of the Almighty will then be abroad in the earth, in a manner not known in any previous age of the world since the flood, the conclusion is unavoidable that men will then more generally fear, and repent, and learn righteousness.

But this judgment dispensation will come to an end; its purposes will be fulfilled when the seven vials are exhausted.

The final result of the judgments of this day is presented to us in the vision which opens the next chapter. The whole purpose of this day will be to exalt righteousness by the prompt and rigid punishment of iniquity. The boldness of the transgressor will quail before the terrors of the Lord, and the strongholds of wickedness totter and fall. The wickedness of the wicked in this way will come to an end, and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of God and of Christ.

Civil governments will then be chiefly directed to the purpose of rooting out and destroying those vices which destroy the happiness of men and the peace of the earth. Most of the great evils which now give rise to or encourage the tumult, disorder, and crime, that destroy the peace of society, maintain their existence by clinging to the garments of civil government. But when these governments are brought under a right action, and give their force to the maintenance of virtuous principles, there will be no parleying with vice. The

moral pestilence which avaricious and ungodly men, in pursuit of gain, now inflict upon society, will not then be left to the feeble resistance of *moral suasion*, as they now urge it should be. This is the plea of those whose occecupation multiplies and spreads the curse of drunkenness, with all its horrid train of fearful and destructive evils upon the land. "Leave "it," they say, "to the force of moral suasion to correct the habits of man," while at the same time they seek and obtain the sanction of *law* for the support and protection of their traffic, which furnishes the aliment of existence to those habits. This will not be the case when government directs its laws to the maintenance of virtue and religion. The great sources of crime wherever they may lie, or however respectable they may now claim to be, will then be *laid hold on*, and the great chain of inexorable law and stern authority will be put around them, and they will find their appropriate place in the bottomless pit.

This summary and decisive method of dealing with the great parent vices which now defy or elude the power of the law, will characterise the exercise of the civil power in the judgment day ; and we have an illustration of the manner of its proceeding in the opening scene of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XX.

### SATAN BOUND AND CAST INTO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT.

1. *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

2. *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

3. *And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

This vision represents the proceeding of the judgment day. It shows the exercise of unrelenting authority, enforcing law against all workers of evil. Its operations will allow of no indulgence to vice—the great chain is expressive of its inexorable nature.

This angel is represented as descending from heaven, as are all those angels whose work promotes righteousness. It follows the gospel dispensation, and deals with men and their crimes in the most summary manner. It *lays hold* on the dragon, that old serpent, &c. There will be no parleying with crime in that day ; no mild moral suasion—beseeching men to desist from their vicious practices. The workers of iniquity will be laid hold on, and will be dealt with promptly and vigorously by the law.

We have seen, in the preceding chapter, the overthrow of the institutions opposed to the doctrines and spirit of Christianity ; and we have seen, to a considerable extent, the conversion of the kingdoms of this world by the power of the

gospel, under the similitude of being slain by the sword of him that sat upon the horse. But still the great multitude of men upon the earth join hand-in-hand in serving the cause of Satan, although their ungodly systems have been overthrown and rendered no longer either influential or respectable.

Civil governments will then become, in the strongest sense of the term, Christian governments. The kingdoms of this world will then become the kingdoms of God and of Christ. In whatever form these earthly powers will then exist, their great aim will be the suppression of crime and the maintenance of virtue. Their laws will all tend to that end, and by prompt and ample punishments, they will bind down the perpetrators of wickedness—men will not then roam at large paying no regard to the laws of God or man. But then, as well as now, there will be many acts of transgression perpetrated so secretly, and in various ways, that human law cannot reach ; all such will then be visited by the direct visitation of God, in a way not now understood ; probably by the vial poured out into the air ; and the hail, or judgments, of that time will be exceeding great.

When the arm of human authority is uplifted to strike down the crimes of men, and the invisible rod of the Almighty is employed in punishing the secret transgressor, men will be afraid, and the power and influence of the devil, leading and instigating them to acts of wickedness, will be bound with the great chain, and this great spirit of evil will be *cast into the bottomless pit and shut up.* The devil will find no agents in that day, when the wrath of God will be thus revealed against all unrighteousness, who will undertake to support his cause ? He will then be compelled to cease his work of deceiving and destroying the nations.

How long this process of binding the devil will continue we are not told, but it will be the peculiar work of the day of judgment, and will end in the banishment of all wickedness from the earth. All tares will be gathered up, and all

that offends against the purity and righteousness of God's law will be taken out of the kingdom of Christ, and nothing will be left to disturb the peace, or mar the happiness of men, when the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, and satan, is bound with the great chain and shut up in the bottomless pit.

These different appellations given to the great spirit of evil, comprehend the various operations of his power over men. At one time he throws whole nations into the horrors of sanguinary war; at another time he shakes the kingdoms of earth by fearful rebellion and anarchy; and on other occasions he has shaken churches and broken the ties of Christian brotherhood, by discord and schisms. Then again he directs the sword of persecution in the hands of civil power, to the destruction of whole religious communities.

Under another form, he employs his subtilty in alluring and tempting men to vice in a thousand different forms, by which the peace and harmony of societies and communities are converted into strife and hatred. But the vision represents all this as now brought to an end by the angel taking hold on the grand instigator of them, and binding him with the great chain, and casting him into the bottomless pit, and shutting him up.

This closes the judgment dispensation; and this is the happy result which the fiery ordeal of that day will bring about. In short, this closes the probationary state of man on the earth. The power of evil is destroyed—peace and order have succeeded to the discord and strife which formerly reigned, and the righteous are now for ever freed from the presence and influence of evil, and placed beyond the reach of sin and temptation.

In the nervous language of the text: Laying hold of the dragon, that old serpent, binding him with the great chain, and shutting him up in the bottomless pit, so that he can no longer deceive the nations; strikingly illustrate the proceeding and final result of the judgment day.

But the moral and intellectual powers of man do not find their limit with the close of this trying dispensation. The ending of this day opens the way for a higher and nobler exercise of his powers, in a state where man will be freed from all that obstructs and defeats his higher progress in the present life ; the circle of this life has been filled up, and a higher and wider circle will be thrown open for the greater development of his immortal powers. But more of this in its proper place.

So long as man retained his original rectitude, the tendency of his whole nature was to God. But, after he fell from that state and became involved in transgression, his moral gravitation was changed, and he fell off from God. To recover man from this great apostasy, has ever been the design of the various dispensations through which he has passed, and is still passing, each succeeding dispensation raising him higher, and showing him more of God, and of himself too, than the preceding one did.

Leaving the patriarchal times, which may be called the starlight age of revelation, we next ascend to the Mosaic dispensation, in which the religion that taught men the knowledge and the worship of the true God, first became embodied in the form of divine institutions, and God was better known in this dispensation than he was in the patriarchal age. His purity and holiness were represented by the washings and purifications of the ceremonial services, and his justice was heard in the denunciation of his law, while his glory and majesty were seen in the sublime and awful spectacle of the mount that burned with fire. So terribly sublime was that representation of the august presence of God, that Moses, while he looked upon it, said—*I exceedingly fear and quake.*

Passing from this dispensation of mingled terror and hope, we next behold God made manifest in the flesh. Christ, reflecting the glory and attributes of the Father, and pouring upon the world, in the grace and mercy of his mission, the

Christian day—a day in which the light of the knowledge of the glory of God revealed itself in the face of Jesus Christ.

This, we are told, is the last dispensation of a probationary character, and it will close with the judgment day, as already described. It will leave man in the highest state to which moral and intellectual nature can be carried in his present life. But the developments of his moral and intellectual powers do not stop or end with the close of this dispensation; he will only then *begin to live.* Taking leave of all that is connected with sorrow, affliction, and death, changing his mortality for a state of immortality, and his present vile body for a body like unto Christ's glorious body, he will take his place in the new world, where his redeemed and regenerated nature will ever rise and expand, unclogged by the mortality that now depresses him, and untempted and unassailed by evils that now ensnare and embitter his sorrowful life.

This is the state to which Christ refers in those words he will address to his faithful servants : *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

This is the glorious climax of existence to which the righteous are pressing, and where they will be forever distinguished amongst the higher orders of God's intelligent creation.

This future state of man's glorious being is the subject of the next symbolical representation in this chapter.

But before we proceed further in the subject, I must meet some objections, growing out of the common belief that the world is to be destroyed by fire, either before or at the judgment day. The texts of Scripture chiefly relied upon to support this opinion are the following : *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. And to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* * * * *When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them*

*that believe in that day.* (2 Thess.) St. Peter uses language still stronger in his Second Epistle. He says: *The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

There is nothing in the words of Christ implying that the world is to be destroyed by fire. All that can be inferred from his words is, that the visible creation is subject to mutation, and shall pass away, or be so changed in its constitution and properties as to become a new heavens and new earth; but his word is not subject to these mutations, and shall not pass away.

The only instance in which he speaks of fire in connection with the day of judgment, is when the tares are gathered and bound in bundles to be *burned*. But, from what has been already said of the tares, we know that they are metaphorically spoken of, and, beyond a doubt, the fire which is to burn them can be regarded only in the same light. Christ said on another occasion, *I came to send fire on the earth*, clearly using the term *fire* in a figurative sense.

St. Paul, when he speaks of Christ coming in flaming fire, has no reference to material fire, but to the judgments which will then banish the ungodly from the presence of God, and the glory of his power. He makes frequent use of the term fire in connection with the trials, or tests, to which the works of all men will be subjected in that day; and he says in his Epistle to the Hebrews: *our God is a consuming fire.* The tongue is a *fire*, as St. James expresses it, meaning of course nothing more than to express the mischievous effects of the improper use of that member. These texts, as well as a great many others that might be adduced, serve to show that the scriptural use of the term fire, does not always imply material fire.

But the language of St. Peter is so strong and direct, that we can hardly suppose he could have intended anything else, than that the great change which all scripture concurs in

saying will pass upon this world, would be attended with fire in some form or other. But even his strong language does not justify the belief that an entire destruction of this earth by fire is intended. St. Peter's language is highly figurative as was the custom with the Jewish writers ; and we shall do neither him nor his subject any injustice by restricting his terms to a meaning which will be consistent with other scripture upon this point.

That this earth is destined to undergo a wonderful change, no believer in divine revelation will question. The heavens and the earth that now are, will by this change become converted into the new heavens and the new earth ; not to be destroyed, but will be physically regenerated. All the evils that came upon the world by man's transgression, will be removed. St. Peter calls it the *restitution* of all things ; Christ calls it the regeneration ; and how appropriate this term is, will appear, when we consider that all the elements which gave this world its primeval glory and perfection are still in it, but in a state so discordant and chaotic that they cannot be developed. The regeneration, or restitution of all things will purify and harmonise those elements.

The physical regeneration of the earth is referred to by Christ, in Matt. xix. : *Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory ; ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* This regeneration will take place when Christ shall sit on the throne of his glory ; and agrees with the restitution spoken of by St. Peter, in his sermon in Jerusalem, (Acts, iii. chap.: 21 verse) *Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken of by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

The subject of this regeneration of the physical world is interwoven with all the writings of the prophets, and is the theme of some of the sublimest odes of David.

The question is not whether such a change is to take

place, but whether this earth is to be destroyed by fire, according to the general belief of men. The destruction of the world by the flood is not produced by St. Peter as a parallel case ; but he points to that event to refute the argument of scoffers, who will arise and contradict the word of God, saying: *Where is the evidence, or what circumstances show that the promise or prediction of Christ's coming again will ever be verified, seeing that all things remain as they were from the beginning of the creation?* St. Peter says they are willingly ignorant of the fact that the world had once been overflowed by water and perished. He adduces the overflowing and perishing of the world by the flood as a refutation of their argument : *that all things remain as they were from the beginning ;* on which hypothesis they build their infidelity, and aver that no such change in the world as prophecy declares, will ever occur.

But the language of St. Peter is : *The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved to fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

From this saying has arisen the opinion, that God holds the present world in a state of preservation, until the time fixed in his own purpose shall arrive, when he will utterly destroy it by fire ! just as a condemned criminal is held in chains until the period when he is to die, when he is brought out and publicly executed.

I draw a very different conclusion from these words of St. Peter, whose style is frequently marked by that bold and ardent language so characteristic of himself. He was addressing an argument to the scoffers referred to, in support of the superintending providence of God over this world ; as if he had said : *This world is not left to move at random, through space, and may or may not fall into ruin again as when it perished by the flood ; but it is reserved, sacredly guarded and protected, by the same word, or power, which in the beginning created it, until the appointed time, when it shall be restored to its original perfection and beauty.*

These scoffers might answer the apostle, and urge, that if the waters which filled the interior portion of the earth were all brought upon the surface, to produce the flood, the gases which would be generated within, producing raging fires in the bowels of the earth, would have consumed it long ago. The apostle meets this argument by saying, that the power which created the heavens and the earth, is employed in keeping it from perishing by internal fires. And he also controls the electrical fires of the heavens, so that they are not permitted to destroy those laws necessary to the preservation of both the heavens and the earth.

The various phenomena of fire so frequently seen in and around the earth, may well suggest the idea that the heavens and the earth are in danger of a fiery dissolution. The blazing lightnings, which threaten to consume the whole heavens, and the devouring volcano through which the earth disgorges its fiery plethora, are so many signs of the presence of accumulated fires, for which the word or power that has the heavens and the earth in reservation has provided means of escape ; otherwise the heavens and the earth might, indeed, fall a prey to devouring fires.

To keep up the great chain of cause and effect, we must bear in mind that it was the introduction of sin which produced the flood, and the flood has so changed the heavens and the earth as to expose them to destruction by fire ; and it is the constant exercise of the divine power only which prevents such a catastrophe.

Now, the question is, for what purpose are the heavens and the earth reserved ? That they may be burnt up, wholly destroyed by fire, in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men ? A literal interpretation of St. Peter's language would justify such a conclusion. But is this his meaning ? Does he not tell us, himself, of the restitution of all things ? He does not speak of a new *creation*, but of a restitution—that is, recovering ; bringing back to what it was before, something that had been taken away—had gone

astray from its original purpose and appropriated use. St. Peter speaks of the heavens and the earth in connection with such a restitution, and for that special design they are *kept in store—preserved from destruction by fire*—until the appointed time of their regeneration, or the restitution of all things, which is the day or period of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

St. Peter gives us a very short description of the grandeur of that scene while the heavens and the earth are passing through the change, which will leave them a suitable abode for the righteous. In the tenth verse of the third chapter of his Second Epistle, he says: *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.* And in the twelfth verse he continues the representation in these words: *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.*

This will be the passing away of the heavens and the earth from their present state to the new heavens and new earth. All the elements which constitute their present organization will be changed. The heavens, or the surrounding atmosphere, as the term here means, will probably undergo rapid alterations, and produce astounding explosions, while the various elements are apparently contending for the dominion of the skies.

The exhibitions of electrical fires in the thunder-storms which are witnessed in our summer months, although sometimes sufficiently appalling to make the stoutest heart quake, are but a trifle in comparison to the *great noise* with which the heavens shall pass away.

While this change is going on in the heavens, like changes will be seen in the earth. Those fiery outbreaks which now pour their lava from the mountain crater, will not then be sufficient to relieve the earth from the effects of internal fires

urging their way to the surface. Where one volcano is now seen, many hundreds will probably then burst from the bowels of the groaning earth, and, mingling with the fires that will seem to fill the heavens, and adding the thunders of a thousand craters to the deafening explosions of the burning heavens, will fully realize the great noise St. Peter speaks of, and will justify the bold and figurative language he employs when he says : *The heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved,* * * * *the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.*

All this is to be accomplished on this earth and in the surrounding heavens. How will it be done ?—and why has it not occurred long ago ? some will ask, since it appears that the heavens and the earth contain within themselves, in their present organization, the elements of this convulsion ?

How it will be done, by what change those elements will be thrown into such fiery disorder, we are not told. But we are told most explicitly *why* this event has not occurred before now. St. Peter tells us that the heavens and the earth that are now, are by the word, or power of God, *reserved*, or preserved—kept in store—in their present state, until the judgment day, when they will be regenerated, purified, and restored to the original heavens and earth. This is plain enough, surely. The heavens, and the earth on which we live, and in which we breathe, are full of the elements of destruction ; but these are restrained, kept back, and hindered from devastating the earth, by the power of God, *in whom we live, and move, and have our being*, also.

The use that St. Peter makes of these awfully sublime scenes, is to urge the church to be prepared for them, by leading a life of holy conversation and godliness. *Looking for,* he adds, *and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,* or judgment day, in which those scenes are to transpire.

Notwithstanding the terror with which they must strike the world of mankind generally, the apostle speaks to Christians rather exultingly, and tells them not only to *look* for—

that is, desire them—but he adds that they should be *hasting* unto the coming of this day of God, like men who are anxiously pressing on and impatiently urging their way to meet some approaching event intimately connected with their future happiness. This was St. Peter's religion, and no one will object to it in view of these things which he had just described ; and such is the religion that every man may possess if he has the same faith and earnestness that St. Peter had.

The opinion that the destruction of the present earth and heavens by fire is to be an entire destruction, leaving nothing of their present substance, involves the destruction also of all beings, all creatures in the animal as well as the vegetable kingdom. All existences, rational and irrational, that are connected with the present earth and heavens, must be necessarily involved in this universal destruction.

But does this comport with the sayings of our Savior, wherein he points his followers to the happiness they will be called to in the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world ?—when he shall appear in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory, then shall his people who have followed him sit also upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*—(Luke, xxii.) Nobody will insist that such language as this is applicable to the present state of man, nor yet can it be understood at all without regarding it as referring to an earthly existence somehow analogous to the present—that is, a material earth and heavens.

The prophet, in the revelation, explains it so by the song which he heard sung by the great multitude of the redeemed, exulting in the glorious results of the atonement by Christ. *For thou wert slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and*

*hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth*—(Rev. v. chap.)

This is conclusive as to the theater of man's future glory and happiness—it is this earth ; not, it is true, just as it is now, but in its renovated, restored state, freed from all the physical evils brought upon it by sin. It will be the new heavens and the new earth by comparison. The whole constitution of the present earth and heavens will be converted, so that all the elements which compose them will unite and blend in harmony, and all tend to the perpetuity and happiness of man. This was the state of the heavens and the earth when they were first created and pronounced by their Creator *very good*—so good that God met with and conversed with man, the new sovereign of this lower creation, in his paradisiacal dominion, and angels joined the holy fellowship in Eden. When the heavens and the earth are restored to this state, when man himself is changed, and his present vile body is fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ, when he walks forth in purity and in fellowship with Christ and angels, conscious of immortality, and that grief, nor pain, nor death, can ever again reach his glorified state, will not that be heaven ? It will be immortality and eternal life, at least.

Having said so much of the restoration of the heavens and the earth to their *original state* of purity and grandeur ; it will not, I hope, be out of place to indulge in some general reflections upon the moral, the intellectual, and physical character of the great progenitors of man, who had their origin, and spent their long lives, of many hundred years, in the first earth and heaven.

Man, in the morning of his being, and in the familiar converse he enjoyed with his Maker, must have been fully apprised of the high dignity of his nature ; that his moral nature was cast in the very mould of the Deity himself, and that in his intellectual powers he stood next to the angels of God. He must have been familiar with the purpose and end

for which he was created, and with the whole economy of God in creating and governing this visible universe. His vast and comprehensive intelligence, at once embraced the knowledge of all that was present, and opened to his view the higher glory and profounder knowledge to which his constantly progressive nature destined him, if he maintained his rectitude and obedience to the government which God had appointed for him.

Nothing that could strengthen his fidelity and fortify his virtue, was withheld from his knowledge. The kingdom of God, which our Savior says was prepared from the foundation of the world, that is, this higher and more glorious state, was appointed for man after his paradisiacal probation should end. This kingdom was presented to Adam, not so much as a reward for his obedience in the station he then occupied, as a revelation of the future glory to which his nature was destined. To this kingdom his aspirations were directed, while a consciousness of the high dignity of his nature was relied upon to keep him in a course of due obedience to the government of his Creator. True, he was admonished, that a default of obedience to the divine government, would involve a forfeiture of this great and glorious destiny. The principal design of this admonition, was, probably, to warn him of the existence of the Devil, and put him on his guard against those seductive and dangerous stratagems which that enemy would employ to effect his overthrow. Alas! the Devil proved successful, and man fell! Then began the great struggle which has ever since been maintained between heaven and hell, for and against the recovery and restoration of man to his original state of holiness and happiness.

This struggle will end in the full triumph of Christianity, and the restoration of all things in the natural world to their primeval perfection, and man himself to even a higher state of glory than that from which he fell.

Man's whole moral constitution was perverted and corrupted by transgression; and, as I have before remarked, his

moral gravitation became changed, and he fell off from God. His posterity could be no otherwise than like himself, morally corrupt.

The very brief account given in the Bible of this great apostasy, does not inform us that either the intellectual or physical powers of man were seriously impaired by the fall. And, as his posterity inherited from Adam his corrupt moral qualities, so his great intellectual, as well as his physical powers, must have descended in like manner.

Adam's knowledge of all things connected with the creation, at the head of which he stood, and of which he was, in a subordinate sense the governor, must have been of an order far above anything known to any other man since the flood. It was in respect to his intelligence that he stood next to the angels, being only a little lower than they. This opinion of his vast intelligence is not a mere conjecture. The history given of the early development of his mental powers corroborates it. (Gen. ii. chap.: 19, 20 verses): *And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them; and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air and to every beast of the field.*

It would not be a just apprehension of the design of this part of revelation to suppose that it was merely intended to show that Adam called the different beasts of the field and the fowl of the air by some name, only to distinguish one from another. It should be regarded as a matter of much higher consequence.

Probably this was the first great subject which God presented to Adam for the exercise of his intelligence, to see, the text says, what he would call them—that is, that he might, by the exercise of his reasoning powers, discover the peculiar properties of the different beasts and fowls, and give to each that name which would best express those properties.

This trial of Adam's intellectual powers was not made be-

cause God did not know what he was capable of. He knew what was in man ; but it was made in order that the man might himself know the wonderful powers which he possessed. This he could never have known but by the exercise of those powers ; and without a consciousness of his high intellectual nature, he never could have enjoyed that felicity for which he was created. *Man that is in honor and understandeth* [or knoweth] *it not, is like the beasts that perish.*

This is true of men in all ages of the world ; their intellectual powers are not known to themselves or to others until, as the common phrase is, circumstances call them out.

This trial of Adam's mental powers must have impressed him with more exalted views of the intellectual greatness of his nature than he would ever have entertained without it. And so long as his moral nature maintained its integrity, his intellectual powers acted in perfect harmony with the high purposes of his creation, and man was necessarily a happy being. But the great moral principle of his nature was subverted by the transgression, and his noble intellectual powers became not destroyed nor impaired, but perverted. He *obliqued* from the original rectitude of his nature, and all his vast powers, moral, intellectual, and physical, went off in wild disorder.

Such was Adam when he begat children in his own image and likeness.

His immediate descendants must have received the nature of their parent, and the whole antediluvian race are spoken of as giants—as men of renown—(Gen. vi. 4.)

These terms, as used by us, have no meaning which even approaches to what they imply in respect to the Antediluvians.

Their vast intelligence may be imperfectly imagined from the wonderful attainments which have been made by some men within the short space of man's present life, oppressed as it is with sorrow, sickness, and haunted by the constant apprehension of death. The Antediluvians knew no such ob-

stacles to the expansion of their intellectual powers ; they knew nothing of sickness ; disease never fastened upon their bodies, and wasted, by pain and agony, both their mental, and physical energies, and death they probably never thought of. Seven, eight, nine hundred years of vigorous, unimpaired health, must have shut out from their thoughts all calculations about dying.

Can any adequate conception be formed by the loftiest intellect of the present world, of the vast accumulation of knowledge, the prodigious sweep of intellectual effort, made by the gigantic minds of those men of renown, whose studies and pursuits in all the channels of knowledge went on, rising higher and spreading wider for seven, eight, or even nine hundred years ? Who can fathom the depth or imagine the height to which their wondrous knowledge extended ? Everything in nature must have contributed to the enjoyments of those people. The gratification of their senses was probably upon a scale no less various and grand than their intellectual delights.

The fondness for the beautiful and the sublime which clings to man in his present poor, brief existence, is a relic derived from antediluvian ancestry. And we may shadow in our fancy, from the pleasure which this feeling now imparts, what must have been the provision made for the gratification of a similar desire in them.

How prolific and various must have been the productions of the earth in rich and delicious fruits, springing spontaneously from its bosom, and how enchanting to the eye must have been the infinite variety of verdure and flowers, spreading their ever-blooming glories before man, and filling the air with indescribable sweetness, while above and around him was spread an atmosphere, so equable, so balmy, and so heaven-like, that angels enjoyed its delights in companionship with man before he fell. If only these, the greatness of man in his physical and intellectual powers, and the beauty

and grandeur of nature, had been lost by the fall, would it not have been a deplorable loss indeed?

Some great men of the present day have greatly misconceived the character of the antediluvian life, and have said that—"they did not envy them their great longevity—they "had no desire to live to the Methusalan age, dragging out a "protracted existence of consumption, rheumatism and gout, "and all the fearful host of disorders which now prey upon "and waste away human life."

But it is a mistake to suppose the antediluvians knew anything about disease, chronic or acute. Their very longevity shows they were not subjects of disease. There was nothing in the climate—nothing in the productions of the earth, calculated to produce disease. Accident or violence, or the sudden breaking down of the human organization from long use, must have been the only cause of death amongst the antediluvians.

We can come to no other conclusion, if we consider that man was made to be immortal—not designed to be the subject of death; and the earth, upon which man was to live, and the heavens which was to surround him, must have been made in conformity with this purpose of his Creator. If any element of disease, dangerous to the life or health of man, had been allowed in the creation of his dwelling place, it would have involved a contradiction between the purpose and the works of the Creator.

If man had continued in his innocency, no violence could have arisen to destroy him; nor is it probable that any accident would ever have occurred to his injury; and it is evident that the natural waste of his bodily powers was guarded against by what the Bible calls the tree of life; which, man being removed from after the transgression, so that he could not *reach forth his hand and take it and live for ever;* he was left without the recuperative effects of this provision for his immortality, and he died by the wearing out of his bodily powers, after sustaining their action for many hundred years.

The duration of man's life was not sensibly diminished until after the flood, showing, that disease, in its various forms, only then began to prey upon the human constitution.

Noah was six hundred years old in the time of the flood, and he survived that universal desolation three hundred and fifty years. But his sons, and their children, showed the deadly effects of the new state of the earth and atmosphere which followed the flood. Shem lived five hundred years after the flood, cotemporaneously with his father Noah, three hundred and fifty years of that time, from whom he and others of his day must have received a very particular account of the antediluvian world. The posterity of Shem, for three generations, reached less than half the age of Noah, and the three generations succeeding these, experienced a similar abreviation in their ages, reaching not much over two hundred years; and in the next three generations the life of man settled down to the appointed limit of three-score years and ten; with many exceptions, however, for the old antediluvian constitution held on to some of Noah's descendants with much greater tenacity than it did to others. But the average length of postdiluvian life with man is three-score years and ten, against ten and twelve times that many years as the extent of his antediluvian age.

Upon what ground is this mighty abbreviation of man's life to be accounted for, if not upon the ground of a radical change in the atmosphere in which he lives, and in the properties of the food which the earth now yields him? And, as no such abbreviation was known until after the flood, the conclusion is unavoidable that the flood let loose upon the world a great amount of natural and social evils, growing out of the curse, which was not experienced by men before that event.

There is another fact which appears in the examination of this difference in the period of men's lives, before and since the flood, quite important to be noticed. It is this: Noah, the connecting link between the old and the new world,

lived almost sixty years in Abraham's time ; that is, Abraham was sixty years old when Noah died, and Shem, the glory of Noah's family, who also lived a hundred years the other side of the flood, was cotemporary with Abraham, and actually survived him some thirty or forty years! Now, when the old and the new world are connected in the persons of such men as Noah, Shem, and Abraham, we have no cause to question the certainty of the accounts we have of the antediluvian world, and of the flood which destroyed it.

I have said already, that the regeneration spoken of by our Savior, and the restitution of all things referred to by St. Peter, point to the recovery of the world to its primeval glory ; and man will be the happy dweller in that world again ; not as he was before, in a state of probation, but in the possession of immortality and eternal life ; again the companion of angels ; nay, more than that, something that Adam never enjoyed—the presence of Christ, in his glorious kingdom, by whom this great redemption was achieved. All the glories of the first heaven will be restored, with the addition of a purity and holiness in the whole nature of man, from which he can never fall.

The flood was the effect of the *curse* for man's transgression ; the change of the heavens and the earth, even though it be by fire, will be the effect of the redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, and will accomplish all that is promised in relation to the new heavens and new earth.

But before we look into this kingdom, let us employ some reflections upon the immediate causes which produced the flood.

### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD BY THE DELUGE.

This event is given to us historically, and may with propriety occupy, in its investigation, the rational powers of man.

No one can contemplate that event and its awful consequences without feeling a desire to look into the causes which operated in producing it.

The sin or transgression of man, and the curse of God which followed it, were undoubtedly the primary causes of the flood.

To suppose that the Almighty, after pronouncing the works of the six days' creation perfect and good, would destroy the earth without some cause which, to his infinite wisdom, was constraining, would be to impute to the Creator a fickleness discreditable even to man.

The transgression of man brought the curse of God upon the earth as well as upon the violator of the divine law. The whole material universe, it is probable, felt the shock of the Almighty's displeasure, and the changes which were ultimately to produce the disruption of the earth then began to operate.

All the physical effects of the curse were to be brought about by the operation of physical causes—the first impulse or tendency that way being given by God himself, whose mysterious power could as easily change as it could establish the laws of the universe.

We are distinctly informed in the history of the transactions in paradise which took place upon the fall of man, what change was made in the economy God had appointed for the perpetuity of man's life. Having incurred the sentence of the law, which denounced death as the penalty of transgression, any further access to the tree of life was denied him, and his immortality then ceased. But death did not put an end to Adam's days for many hundred years after the act which doomed him to die. But the change in the laws of the universe, which was to result in the flood, is not made known to us. Such a change was made, we must suppose, or there could have been no flood, since God did not create the heavens and the earth merely to destroy them. Gen. vii. 6, 7: *And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth,*

*and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth: both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*

The means of effecting this destruction of his works were the waters of the flood.

The long period of nearly two thousand years which transpired from the creation until the flood, does not operate at all against these views.

Events which are of God's appointment, involving changes in the nature or the relation of the laws which he has established, are not often precipitated. The progress of his providential designs are for the most part slow, but their results are, nevertheless, as certain as if they were instantaneous. Hence, St. Peter says: *One day is, with the Lord, as a thousand years.* Nor is this delay, in the execution of his word, *slackness, as some men count slackness.*

The whole history of the antediluvian world is compressed in a very brief space, giving simple facts only which seem to be intended for future amplification by observing natural causes and effects in the phenomena of the postdeluvian world. One of those facts relating to the natural philosophy of the old world, states that *the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth; but there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.*—(Gen. ii. 5, 6.)

That this was not a mere local circumstance, applicable only to the spot where man first had his being, is obvious from the fourth verse of the chapter, which introduces *the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.* This sentence comprehends the earth and the surrounding atmosphere after their creation, and acting under those laws which the Creator had impressed upon them.

If then there was no rain, but as a substitute for it, the exhalations that constantly arose through the day, and descended in sufficient quantities through the night to water the ground, it follows as an unavoidable inference, that the

earth could not have held the same position in relation to the sun, before the flood, as it now holds.

The position of the earth must then have been such as to produce a summer-like temperature over its whole surface, from the equator to the poles. Instead of the present oblique position of the earth, varying its poles 23½ degrees from the horizon, its poles must then have been level with the horizon, and the day and night always equal.

In this position of the earth, the sun, by its uniform action upon its surface, must have raised an inconceivable amount of vapor ; an aeriform sea must have surrounded the globe on all sides. As the earth, in its diurnal revolutions, gradually withdrew its surface from the sun, giving it to the cooling shades of evening ; the dews then descended, first gentle, but as night came on their quantity was greatly increased, until they became the mist that watered the ground. Sol sped his fiery chariot through the day, disseminating heat, then evening came, and from the fountains of the air, pouring copious dew, watered the thirsty earth.

There could have been no such alternation of seasons at that time as those that make up our year. Summer and winter did not then divide the year. These opposite seasons are not mentioned in the Bible until after the flood, for the reason, I presume, that no such changes in the seasons were known before the flood.

The flood must have been the consequence of a change in the position of the earth. But how this change was brought about we have no certain information. We know, however, that even since the flood, the poles of the earth have varied 2·37 degrees from a level with the horizon—that we have had winter and summer, with all the variations and fluctuations that now make the climate of the greater portion of our earth harassing and dangerous to human health ; often blighting the fruits of the earth, and casting down the hopes of the husbandman.

This uncertainty of climate does not prevail in the tropical

latitudes it is true ; but there too, the effects of the general derangement of the physical world are seen and felt in a still more fearful form. There the wild tornado sweeps over the earth and marks its track with wide-spread ruin and devastation, and whole cities are sometimes suddenly engulfed by the terrific earthquake.

There is no part of the earth where some sign of the curse does not appear, and there is no part of it which now bears the impress of its antediluvian paradise.

A sudden change of the earth's poles, from a horizontal to their present oblique position, was adequate to the production of the flood. Such a change must have produced at once, over half the earth, the temperature known to us as winter ; and the effect would be to convert, suddenly, the whole aeriform sea, hanging over that part of the earth, into water, and precipitate it upon the earth. At the same time, and by the same change in the earth's position, its internal waters probably were forced out of their cavernous depths, and bursting forth, they mingled with the mighty floods descending from the upper regions and drowned the earth.

The account the Bible gives of the deluge is particular in stating the two sources whence the waters came ; it says— *The windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up.* The waters came from *above* the earth and *out* of the earth. *Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.*

This was the flood ; and this was the culminating point of the curse upon the natural world for the sin of man. Here was the grand outbreak of the divine wrath which, almost two thousand years before, had cursed the earth for the transgression of Adam.

It does not appear that the antediluvians labored under any particular mark of the divine displeasure, except that they died, after a life of many hundred years. But their life abounded so with all the enjoyments peculiar to their

state, that they probably entertained no idea that they were under the malediction of Heaven, nor did they apprehend any such event as the flood.

Their wickedness is spoken of as not only presumptuous, but extremely aggravating. Noah could tell the generations this side of the flood, all about the conduct and character of the people amongst whom he had spent nearly six hundred years of his life. They, no doubt, jeered him—scoffed at and ridiculed him, and treated his preparation of the ark with infidel scorn, while he preached to them and warned them of impending ruin.

Speaking of these people, our Savior refers to their being absorbed in pleasures, and wholly sensual in their delights. He says: *For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away.* They believed nothing about the flood, and treated the warnings of Noah with the same sort of contempt that most men of this world now treat the warnings of God's Word. But the flood did come, and took them all away—a very short but awfully comprehensive announcement of the end of the antediluvian race.

And just so it will be at the end of the present earth and heavens. Upon the authority of our Savior, in connection with the above texts, he says; *So shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.*

When we consider that it was the act of man that brought the flood upon the old world, some idea may be formed of his importance and consequence in the universe of God. But still higher will our conceptions of his dignity and worth be raised, when we consider the sublime scene of the atonement, when the Divinity of Heaven took upon it the mortality of man, and gave assurance of man's restoration to the favor of his Creator, and the enjoyment of that immortality and eternal life in the kingdom of God for which he was originally created.

In support of the opinion that rain did not fall in the antediluvian world, I will present an argument drawn from the covenant which God made with Noah after the flood.

In almost every instance where God entered into covenant with man, he provided something as a token which should sustain the faith of the man with whom he covenanted in the trials of after life, that whenever he looked upon the token, or reverted to it in his mind, he would be reässured of the faithfulness of God in the performance of his promise. These covenant tokens were sometimes supernatural, and at other times they were the effects of natural laws; but, because those natural laws had never operated before under such circumstances, their effects, when they did occur, had all the force of a supernatural occurrence, the novelty of their appearance being regarded as miraculous, until their frequency made men familiar with them.

I will refer to some of these covenant tokens as the best mode of illustrating my meaning.

In the covenant made with Abraham, recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, there God made promises to his servant which, in the eye of human reason, were impossible of fulfillment. *Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?* God had not only told him that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, but likewise that his posterity should inherit the land or the countries which then spread out before him, stretching away from the rivers to the sea, variegated with lofty mountains and fertile valleys, and filled with powerful and warlike nations. To assure Abraham of the fulfillment of this promise, God appointed a very remarkable token. *Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.* All these animals, the pigeon and dove excepted, were divided into two equal parts, and laid, each piece opposite to its fellow, with a space between. In the darkness of the night, God caused a smoking furnace and a burning lamp to pass through the space between the

pieces of the slain beasts. This was the token, the particular thing that was to keep up a vigorous remembrance of this covenant in the mind of Abraham and his posterity. The token itself was supernatural, and was not designed to be repeated.

The whole scene of this wonderful transaction is full of instruction. The smoking furnace represented the affliction which Abraham's posterity were to suffer while in bondage in a strange land. The sacrifice and use made of the beasts implied that the religion of his descendants would be typical, expressed by animal sacrifice, and the burning lamp showed the blessing that all nations were to experience through the seed of Abraham. The lamp was a beautiful prefiguration of the gospel which was to lighten the Gentiles, and give the knowledge of the true God to all people.

The early history of Moses affords some examples of remarkable tokens given to strengthen his faith in the promise of God.

Moses was deputed by the Almighty to negotiate for the release of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. He was well acquainted with the difficulty and danger that must attend such an embassy, and he earnestly desired to decline the appointment.

But, he was made fully sensible of the greatness of the power that would go with him, by the tokens which were exhibited for his encouragement.

Moses had presented to him—first, the bush, enveloped in fire, and yet was not at all consumed ; then the staff that was in his hand, when he threw it upon the ground, became a hideous serpent, so terrible that he fled from the face of it. But when, in obedience to the command of God, he returned and took hold of its tail, suddenly it became the staff again. Then his hand was smitten with leprosy, but when he thrust it into his bosom and withdrew it thence again, it was as healthy and perfect as his other hand. These tokens decided

his purpose, and he went boldly into the presence of Pharaoh and demanded the liberation of the Hebrews.

Gideon's faith and fortitude were likewise established in time of great fear and danger, by the presentation of sensible objects, which could be no otherwise accounted for but by the miraculous exercise of divine power. An irruption was made into the country of the Israelites, by the Midianites and the Amalekites, and other nations, threatening the destruction of the land and captivity of the people. God moved Gideon to prepare an army to meet the multitude that had invaded the land, and promised to give him victory. But Gideon did not feel quite satisfied with the *promise* of success ; he desired a token—something that was visible, to confirm his faith. The manner of this sensible token was proposed by Gideon himself. A fleece of wool was placed in the open air, and the token of his success was to consist in its being saturated with dew while the ground remained dry. And it was even so. In the morning, he wrung from the fleece of wool a bowl full of water while the ground remained entirely dry. In order to make assurance doubly sure, Gideon solicited that he might once more be favored with a sensible evidence that he was under the guidance and protection of God ; and he proposed that, on the next night, the fleece might remain dry, and the *ground* should be wet with dew, just reversing the manifestation of miraculous interposition. It was granted, and the result was according to his own proposition ; the ground all around was wet with dew, but the fleece was perfectly dry.

Gideon now was satisfied as to the result, and he was ready, and actually did, with no more than *three hundred men*, fall upon, discomfit, and put to route, an army, which for multitude could hardly be numbered. Judges, 6 chap.

In all these instances, it was evident that the token was something that had never been known before ; something singular—strange, and calculated to make lasting impressions upon the mind. Nothing of an ordinary occurrence—nothing

that had been common in these countries would have answered the purpose that these tokens were designed to effect. Abraham did not feel assured of the honor and prosperity of his posterity until he saw the miraculous token of the lamp and the smoking furnace.

Moses it is not likely would have ventured himself in the presence of so haughty and despotic a monarch as Pharaoh, if he had not witnessed the tokens presented to him at Mount Horeb. Nor would Gideon have assailed the camp of the combined nations of the east with only three hundred men, if he had not been endowed with supernatural courage by witnessing the miracle of the fleeçe of wool and the dew.

But let us now return to the case of Noah. No one can fully appreciate the lonely and mournful state of Noah's mind after he left the ark. When he entered it, he left behind him a world filled with a great and joyous population; abounding in sources of intellectual and social pleasures. The face of the earth itself, covered with the endless varieties of its rich and beautiful productions, and all nature smiling in the balmy and salubrious airs of a pure and stormless sky.

But when he stepped out of the ark after the flood had subsided, what must have been the sorrow and despondency of his mind, as he looked upon the earth and saw no signs of life—no living being, except those he had with him in the ark.

And when he looked to the heavens he saw the storm-clouds driven over its face by tempestuous winds, and the sun buried in their darkness. The joyous companies of constellations which once glittered and danced in the great vault of the night-sky, had become pale, cold, and sickly, glimmering only with a feeble light, just enough to show that they had survived the universal ruin, but with the loss of that brilliancy which once gave the heavens their nightly splendor.

Then, turning his eyes to the earth, he beheld its once fair

and beautiful surface torn, broken, and riven into fearful chasms. Splendid cities, thronged with a gay and active population, and adorned with works of art and elegance, and vast regions, that once gave their varied and rich productions to men, and boundless forests, inhaling the noon-tide heat, and sending forth from their deeply-shaded recesses a cool, invigorating air in return, were all gone ; and where these once stood, mighty seas now rolled their restless billows. Turbid rivers were seen swelling and rushing onward through valleys which the flood had scooped out. Mountains were piled on mountains, over whose rugged cliffs torrents were leaping and plunging headlong, from precipice to precipice, in the wild uproar of a thousand cataracts.

What must have been the dread and apprehension of Noah as he beheld this scene of destruction, and how horror-struck he must have been whenever he saw the clouds gathering in the heavens, and heard the thunders of the coming storm ! He could feel nothing less than an excruciating dread of another deluge.

Such would have been the life of terror that he and his posterity would have spent upon earth—trembling with alarm at every cloud that appeared in the heavens.

But God mercifully relieved Noah and his posterity from such fears, by assuring him that the earth should be no more destroyed by a flood. This assurance was given in the form of a covenant, and the *rainbow* was the *token* connected with this covenant.

We read the covenant in the tenth chapter of Genesis. The purpose of the covenant and the bow are stated thus : *And I will establish my covenant with you ; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood ; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for succeeding generations : I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a*

*token of a covenant between me and the earth.*—(11, 12, 13 verses.)

This bow was the visible sign on which Noah was to rest his trust and confidence in the covenant promise that the earth should no more be destroyed by a flood. Would it, then, have answered the purpose of such a token if Noah had ever seen it before? If this gorgeous arch had ever spanned the antediluvian heavens, would it have been any more than tantalizing his fears to direct his attention to that, and tell him to rest his confidence upon that bow, that there would be no more flood upon the earth? His answer would have been, "I saw that bow in the former sky, but, nevertheless, "the earth was destroyed by a flood."

If Noah had ever seen a rainbow, or anybody else had ever seen one before the flood, it would have been utterly useless to offer him that as a relief from his dread of another flood. It was just because no such thing had ever been seen or heard of in the antediluvian sky, that it was selected by God as the token which should free the mind of Noah and his posterity from all apprehension of a recurrence of the deluge.

The rainbow is the effect of rain. It is nothing supernatural; but as it was to Noah something entirely new upon the face of nature, its effect upon his mind was the same as if it had been supernatural.

The use which God was pleased to make of the rainbow when one was first produced, is a conclusive argument in support of the opinion that rain, as we are now familiar with it, was not known in the antediluvian age. And if rain was unknown then, and is very common now, how is this difference in the two climates to be accounted for upon any other principle than a change in the position of the earth? A mist or copious dews supplied the place of rain before the flood, when all things in nature were harmonious, under the order and arrangement which God had pronounced to be *very good.*

This brings us back to the point from which we started in this digression. We see that sin has defaced the whole world—swept off the population of the old world, and thrown the earth out of its place, thereby introducing diseases and a thousand physical evils which did not belong to this earth in its primeval state.

But in the great physical regeneration referred to by our Savior, and the restitution of all things, as St. Peter styles it, speaking of the same event, all those evils are to be remedied, and the present heavens and earth are to remolded and renovated, and converted into the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness only.

## THE MILLENNIUM.

The banishment of Satanic influence from the earth will bring about a new state of things never known before since the fall of man. In a moral sense, this itself would constitute a new heavens and a new earth. Old things will then be done away, and all things will become new.

This introduces the thousand years' reign of Christ, and is usually denominated the kingdom of God, by Christ and his apostles. It is that state our Savior referred to in the prayer which he taught his disciples, and through them, the whole church—*Thy kingdom come—thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Whenever the Christian utters the Lord's prayer, he prays for the coming of the Millennium—for the thousand years' reign of Christ—for the appearing of the kingdom of God!

What do we understand by a kingdom, but where the rule and authority of the king are submitted to and obeyed? But this is not the case in the present gospel economy. By far the greater part of the world, even in Christendom, is opposed to the authority and law of God, and totally disregard his word. We cannot, with propriety, call the present state of Christianity *the kingdom of God.* But there are

many Christians, perhaps the great majority of them, who never look beyond the present gospel economy for the kingdom of God; supposing that the meaning of Christ went no further than the gospel dispensation, although he tells us plainly that the gospel is the announcement of this kingdom. It calls to all the world and proclaims the coming of this kingdom—it is called the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, we are to look beyond the gospel for the kingdom of God.

But I need not have quoted these Scriptures in support of this position; one declaration of our Savior is fully sufficient to establish it—*My kingdom is not of this world.* Now whether we understand *this world* to mean the present mundane system, or the Christian dispensation, in either case the words of our Savior are of equal force. *My kingdom is not of this world;* and men will understand when they pray—*Thy kingdom come*, that they are praying for that which is yet to come, a higher and more glorious state of the divine government, than any that has ever appeared before. I will repeat what I have said before, that the Millennium, or thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints, is this kingdom of God.

The question which divides the church is, whether this reign of Christ will be by his Spirit, or by his personal presence. This question will be discussed in the further progress of the subject. It is time now to hear the prophet where he announces the introduction of the kingdom. This will be seen in the first clause of the fourth verse of the chapter.

4. *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.*

Of whom does the prophet speak when he says, *they* sat upon them? that is, upon the thrones. Undoubtedly he is referring to those he saw and described in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the preceding chapter—the armies in heaven, following Christ, their Lord. This great retinue represents the triumph of the gospel, and the binding and imprisonment of Satan is the result of this triumph.

Following these events, and in its proper order, the prophet now shows us, in that part of the fourth verse quoted, the opening of the millennium state—the kingdom of God. The terms, *thrones* and *judgment*, employed by the prophet, are not to be taken in the restricted sense known to us. They are used figuratively, to convey the idea of powers, dominions and governments ; such, probably, as St. Paul referred to when speaking of what he saw and heard in the third heavens. He says to this effect : *It hath not entered into the heart of man, nor hath his eye seen or his ear heard, the things which are appointed for man in that kingdom.* The glory and dominion of that state are beyond the highest conception of the human mind, and can only be known by divine revelation, as they were made known to St. Paul.

We will now look at some of the many passages of Scripture which refer to this kingdom. Passing by what the rest of the Jewish prophets have said about it, I shall only present the vivid picture of it as given by that most extraordinary man, Daniel.

Daniel occupies, amongst his compeers in the Mosaic economy, the same position which St. John in the Apocalypse occupies amongst his brethren, the Apostles of the Christian Church.

In the explanation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel sketched with wonderful precision the prominent features of all the great kingdoms that would rise, or that then existed in the earth, down to the dismemberment of the Roman Empire ; and he speaks of the kingdoms that would arise out of the ruins of that vast monarchy, and says : *In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.* He is more particular in his description of this kingdom in the seventh chapter. I shall quote only the twenty-seventh verse of that chapter, as being sufficient for my present purpose : *And the kingdom and do-*

*minion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

There are two things to be noticed in this description of a kingdom; the first is, that it was set up by the God of heaven, in the days of those kings, or kingdoms, which would arise out of the ruins of the Roman Empire. In the time when these kingdoms were established, and in the exercise of separate and independent sovereignty as kingdoms of the earth, not as hordes of barbarians occupying different portions of the earth.

These powers were not known in their character of kingdoms, referred to by Daniel for more than six hundred years after Christ had set up the kingdom of grace, or had opened the gospel economy amongst men. It is clear, then, that the kingdom of grace established by Jesus Christ while he was upon the earth, cannot be the kingdom of God spoken of by the prophet, which will be set up in the time or in the existence of the kingdoms that grew up out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, since these kingdoms, in the proper sense of the term, had no existence for several centuries after the days when Christ was upon the earth.

The next point to be noticed is that this kingdom will be set up in the earth, as it *will break to pieces, and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. It shall never be destroyed.* It will not be subject to those revolutions which change the present kingdoms of this world; therefore this *kingdom shall not be left to other people;* it will be set up by the God of Heaven, and its dominion and greatness shall be given to the saints of the Most High, *whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.*

The words of our Savior are very clear in their application to this kingdom, both as to its appointment and his government over it.

*Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the*

*regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelves thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* (Matt. xix. 28.) The same promise is repeated, with more fullness, in the twenty-second chapter of Luke: *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

This language is so identical with that used by the prophet in the Apocalypse, that we see at once who those are he saw sit upon thrones.

The government of this kingdom which God will set up is given to Christ—*as my Father hath appointed unto me.* The supreme authority and power in this kingdom are with Christ; he is at its head, and his followers are appointed by him in the exercise of those functions necessary to the administration of that kingdom.

*That ye may eat and drink at my table.* This is a figurative expression, which denotes intimate fellowship and honorable distinction. It refers to the custom of kings when they would confer great honor upon their subjects by admitting them to eat at the king's table and in his presence. All the honor of such an occasion arises from the *presence* of the king.

This text is conclusive as to the *personal* reign of Christ with his saints in that kingdom. The language which assures us of the personal presence of the saints in this millennium kingdom, is as clear as to the personal presence and reign of Christ at the same time. And by what mode of fair interpretation can we make the presence of the saints a personal, individual, tangible presence, and explain the same language when it applies to Christ as meaning only a spiritual presence with his saints?

If Christ will not appear personally in that kingdom, we have no authority for supposing that his saints will, and the whole of revelation on that subject becomes an unmeaning fancy.

The eating and drinking at his table implies the existence of a free, unrestrained intercourse and fellowship between Christ and his people in his kingdom.

In what respect would the thousand years' reign of Christ differ from his reign in the gospel dispensation, if the former is to be a spiritual and not a personal reign? This present gospel economy is the reign of Christ, by his Spirit, in the hearts of his people. But we must divest scripture language of all sense and meaning, if the thousand years' kingdom is not to be something that will greatly differ from the gospel dispensation.

The presence of Christ with his few followers in the beginning of Christianity, was not designed to be permanent. Indeed the history of his life shows us that the success of the gospel in the world, required that his personal presence should not be continued on earth.

He said himself: *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you, that I go away; but I will send the Comforter to you.* The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, supplies the place of Christ's personal presence with his people; since all the instruction, comfort and encouragement which the personal presence of the Savior could impart to men in the present life, are received by his church from the presence and in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit. That power which is mighty in pulling down the strongholds of Satan and reproving wickedness in high places, but is nevertheless invisible to the eye, and not to be reached by the jealous and excited powers of earthly kings. If there was a personal embodiment of this power, those kings would lose no opportunity of laying violent hands upon whomsoever would avow himself the author of a religion that so boldly rebuked their wickedness, as Ahab sought to lay hands on Elijah, for a similar reason. It was, therefore, necessary for the Church—necessary to the progress of Christianity, that Christ should go away. He had given, in his miracles and his death, and resurrection, as strong proof as could be given of the divinity of his religion.

A lifetime of miracles in addition, would have added nothing as evidence, to the truth of his gospel, but would have only excited and chafed the pride and passions of the wicked rulers of this world. Even his feeble and obscure disciples became objects of hate and vengeance to the haters of the new religion; and his apostles, whose motto ever was, *to obey God rather than men*, were made to dwell in jails and dungeons, wear the chains of cruel and despotic power, and then suffer the horrors of the martyr's death.

Such would have been the conflicts with ungodly power, that Christ would have been continually exposed to by maintaining his personal presence with the church in the world. He must either have yielded his life, as he did to the first blow of his enemies, or have destroyed their lives by his almighty power; which would have given to the gospel an aspect utterly incompatible with the forbearing mercy and good-will to man, which is its true character.

The hearts of his disciples were oppressed with sorrow on learning that he should leave them; but, besides consoling them with assurances of the Comforter, whom he would send to take his place in the church, he also addressed these words of consolation and tenderness to them: *Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.* John 14 chap.: 1, 2, 3 verses.

This is the saying which assures us of our restored fellowship with Christ, and that we shall be like him—for we shall see him as he is. These are the words of Christ himself! can we have higher authority? This is the great tap-root of that tree of hope from whose ever-fruitful branches, the humble follower of his Lord gathers daily fruit, strengthening his faith and confirming his hope, that where his Lord is there he shall be also.

And whenever the reader of these pages looks into his Bible, and reads the confident declarations of the apostles: *We shall see him as he is. Our vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body. When he who is our life shall appear, then we also shall appear with him in glory. Now we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him*; and many other such passages; let him know that they all spring out of that word of comfort which our Savior dropped into the hearts of his sorrowing disciples—*I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also!*

The doctrine of the personal reign of Christ on the earth in the thousand years, was familiar in the early period of the church. It must have been so, if we take the testimony of Scripture. This doctrine was announced by the two men in white apparel; angels they were undoubtedly, under the garb of men, at the very time that Christ left the world and ascended to his Father. (Acts, 1 chap.: 9, 10 and 11 verses.) *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, "ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.*

St. Paul, in the grand and forcible manner usual with him, uttered a declaration to the same effect. 1 Thess. 4 chap.: 16, 17: *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall arise first. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

It should not surprise us that this comforting doctrine was lost from the church, when we consider the deep apostasy, the great falling away which this same apostle predicted would

happen to the church. It commenced, as we have seen, in the fifth century, and continued to grow deeper and darker until the beginning of the sixteenth century. Not only was this doctrine swept away in this flood of apostasy, but almost every other doctrine taught by the word of God was superseded by idle traditions and the teachings of men of corrupt minds.

The Reformation has restored much of the fine gold of gospel doctrine which the church had lost by her apostasy ; and as this light continues to shine brighter and spread more extensively over the earth, men will see in its doctrines everything that is calculated to elevate man, and bring him into a happy state of union and fellowship with Christ.

It will be objected by some, who will say that the kingdom of God cannot apply to the thousand years' reign of Christ, because he said to his disciples the kingdom of God is within you. True, the principles of the kingdom of God are in every regenerated man, but in an embryo state. They are sown in his moral nature, and in their operation they fit the man for the kingdom of God ; and when he enters the state with which these principles connect him, in that congenial clime they will then have their fuller expansion, and will unite him with his Lord when he shall appear in his glory.

If we carry with us in our contemplations of the thousand years' reign what the people of God are in this dispensation, afflicted, tempted, distressed, and persecuted, and what Christ was in his short sojourn upon earth—buffetted, despised, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief—and what the governments of the earth were—cruel, oppressive, and persecuting—we shall find great difficulty in bringing our minds to comprehend how the thousand years of the reign of Christ, with his saints, upon earth can be possible. But the apostle says, in reference to that state, *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* As if he said, the things in the present dispensation are so infinitely below that glorious state, that not even a remote comparison can be formed from them of what we shall

be. Only one thing is certain, and that is, we shall be like *him*, for we shall see him as he is.

I have thus far attempted to establish the doctrine of the personal reign of Christ in the millennium state. But all has not been said on that point that might be adduced. Further observations on different characteristics of the thousand years' reign, will add, incidentally, other arguments in favor of it.

All Christians admit that where Christ is, there his followers will be. But they say, that is in heaven—after the heavens and earth are burned up, and the day of judgment has pronounced a final sentence upon every individual of Adam's race.

Enough has been already said upon the day of judgment. I have shown it to be a dispensation of the law—the day or period of time alluded to by the apostle in his first Epistle to Timothy, chapter 4 : 14, 15 : *That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords.* This exercise of Christ's power and display of his majesty, in subduing the powers and dominion of earth to his will, precedes the millennium state, as I have shown. But the earth is not burned up, for the thousand years' reign is upon the earth; and it will surprise many of my readers when I say, that *this thousand years' state is heaven,* and they will be still more amazed at being told that we dwell in a heaven *now.*

To make this quite clear, it is only necessary that we should entertain a proper apprehension of the meaning of the term heaven. The term has two general significations, the one moral or spiritual, and the other material. *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* says the Psalmist. *The heaven is my throne*—Isa. 66 : 1. *Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things*—Acts 3 : 21. *For we know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,* [or the eternal heavens]—2 Cor. 5 : 1.

In all these instances, the term heaven, or heavens, has a spiritual signification; and in the following texts, a material signification must be supposed: Job, 15 chap.: 15: *Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.* Psalms 19: 1: *The heavens declare the glory of God.* Isa. 55 chap.: 9: *For as the heavens are higher than the earth.*

But the point I wish to establish is this, that every dispensation which embodies in it an appointed system of means for the exercise of the moral government of God over man, is properly designated by the term heaven, or heavenly. And where such a heaven is established, there is the throne of God, as he says in Isaiah: *The heaven is my throne*—meaning that God's government is exercised there—throne implies government.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the apostle expresses the work of grace wrought in us by Christ Jesus, as putting us in heavenly places; chap. 1: 3: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* Chap. 11: 4, 5, 6: *But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* Chap. 3: 10: *To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church, the manifold wisdom of God.* The meaning of the apostle in this text is, that the *secular powers*—the governments of this world, which exist together with the institutions of Christianity, may be made sensible of the wisdom and mercy of God in the salvation of men, by, or through the church—the holy life and conversation of her members.

Thus is the present dispensation styled heaven; and in the Psalms, and other writings of the prophets and good men of the Jewish dispensation, the same term of designation is applied to that economy.

But the thousand years of Christ's reign with his saints

will be heaven, in an infinitely higher degree than either the Jewish or the Christian dispensation.

Having reached this state in the Apocalyptic disclosures, I shall make it the subject of more particular remark.

I have kept before the reader, the great subject of progression, in the divine government of God over the world; and the constantly progressive powers of man's moral and intellectual nature; these are the causes of the successive and more elevated dispensations through which the world is passing. These progressive changes in the moral and intellectual world do not strike the common observation of men, as sudden and unexpected events do. They are best known by the grand results which they produce in the great and beneficial changes derived by society from these results.

The great improvements in the arts, and new discoveries in science, have produced the steamships, the railroads, and the magnetic telegraph. Probably, very few men knew to what extent the improvements and discoveries in the arts and sciences had extended, until these wonderful results proclaimed it. And just so it is in the moral progression of the world. Mankind, generally, have no distinct perception of the extent to which this has reached, by what they see around them; nor will they know, until the great results which are to arise from this progression shall proclaim it. The light and influence of the divine government over the world must *shine brighter and brighter to the perfect day*, then the whole world will become lighted with the moral glory of the kingdom of God, as the sky is lightened by the lightnings that shine out of the east even to the west, filling the whole heavens with its brightness. The infinite creations and dominions of the Almighty, are a subject too vast for the grasp of man's intellect in his present state. He is not able to comprehend, by the strongest effort of his mental powers, even the world that he lives in, which is but a speck in the boundless dominions of God.

I am far from supposing the sovereignty and benignity of

the Almighty found their full exercise in the creation of this world, and in recovering it after it fell from its allegiance to him.

The revolt of man from the government of his Creator, no doubt led to events in the divine economy which would never have occurred if this revolt had not taken place.

The intercourse and communication which Christ had with his disciples and the people, during his sojourn upon the earth, reveal to us the fact of his pre-existence before he came into this world ; and even before the creation of this world. The glory which he had with the Father before the world was, he spoke of while he was yet with his disciples, and it is not presumptuous in man to suppose, that this glory consisted in the exercise of divine sovereignty in the government of those *many mansions*, which he informed his disciples were in his Father's house.

Those mansions are but imperfectly thought of, if they are regarded as mere convenient places of abode for the righteous who once dwelt upon earth. The idea intended by our Savior no doubt was, that they were thrones, dominions and powers of inconceivable grandeur and glory, to a finite mind, with which his sovereignty had been connected before he came into this world, and which he had left for a short season to execute the embassy of mercy to fallen man. Having completed this work of divine compassion he left the world again, substituting for his personal presence with his church, the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The apostle speaking of Christ's coming into the world employs language not only in harmony with these views, but represents his appearance amongst men as a temporary suspension of the dominion which he exercised over the higher order of intellegences before the world was : *For your sakes he was manifested in these last times. He who was rich, for your sakes became poor.*

Christ laid aside the glory of his power and dominion which he had with the Father, and clothed himself in the

habiliments of humanity. The riches of unspeakable majesty were dispensed with, and the loneliness and poverty of man were assumed in their place. He came amongst men as a man—partook, with them who followed him, of their scanty fare—journeyed with them by day and rested with them by night ; and while he mingled his tears with theirs in the scenes of this world's sorrows, he would talk to them in words that made their hearts burn with joy.

In this way the mercy and counsel of Heaven were brought to bear upon this revolted portion of God's creatures.

But with this appearance of meanness and poverty in the man Christ Jesus, there were occasionally such outbreaks of the divinity that was concealed under this outward appearance of frail humanity that electrified his disciples, and caused them to exclaim with amazement, *what manner of man is this ?*

Christ merely referred to those mansions, in conversation with his disciples, as a suggestion, which their deeper experience and knowledge in the things of God, in subsequent life, might dwell upon. It is evident he did not enter into any particular explanation of them ; these were, probably, among the many things he had to say to them which they could not *bear at that time*, their moral vision being too feeble to bear the strong light of such revelations.

But he distinctly informed them that he was going away in order to prepare a place or mansion for *them. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also.*

He refers to this gathering of his people with him in almost the same language, in the three evangelists : *And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom*—Matthew and Mark. Luke gives the same account, with some slight variation, (chap. 22) : *And when the hour was come he sat down, and*

*the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come.*

Eating and drinking bread and wine, literally, cannot be intended by our Savior in these words ; but the *effects* of the atonement are referred to, and the bread and wine are here used as the symbols of the atonement.

The effects of the atonement are *righteousness, and joy, and peace, in the Holy Ghost ;* and the apostle says the kingdom of God consists in these, *not in meats and drinks.*

If the texts previously quoted to prove the personal reign of Christ with his saints in this kingdom are not considered sufficient for that purpose, surely these words of our Lord are. If there will be no personal presence of the Savior with his disciples, when in that kingdom they enjoy the full fruits or effects of the atonement, then there could have been no such presence when he administered the last solemn supper, with the assurance that he would resume it with them in the kingdom of God.

But the difficulty does not lie in believing that the people of God will enjoy the personal presence of their Savior when they enter into the kingdom of God : this is promised as the reward of the righteous. The difficulty is in reconciling their minds to the belief that the thousand years' reign is this kingdom. They cannot make that kingdom, which it is here contended is to be on earth, consistent with their views of the infinitely glorious heavens—the very abode of the great God himself—where they have ever supposed the saints are to look for their future home.

This difficulty, however, will disappear, if we pay attention to what the Bible teaches on this subject.

Daniel speaks of this kingdom of God as being set up in

the days of the kingdoms which arose out of the dismemberment of the Roman Empire. And he further says: *The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.*

Others of the Jewish prophets as well as Daniel spoke of the kingdom of God that should come; and the belief and expectation of the people that such a kingdom was to appear in the earth, was so well settled, that when it was spoken of by our Savior and his apostles no explanations were ever made in relation to it. Indeed none were necessary, for it was the invariable custom of the Jews to imbue the minds of their children with a knowledge of their scriptures; so that the whole nation was educated in their doctrines and in their moral teachings. An instance of this national sentiment, that the kingdom of God was to appear, is mentioned in the history of Joseph of Arimathea, who was an honorable counsellor, and who went boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus, that he might place it in his own tomb. It is said of this man that *he also waited for the kingdom of God.* His knowledge of this kingdom was not derived from the teachings of Christ, for Joseph was a Jew, one of the Sanhedrin: his knowledge of this kingdom was derived from the Jewish prophets. The first preaching of Christ was to announce the coming of this kingdom. Mark, chap. 1 : 15, 16 : *Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.* The word *gospel,* means glad tidings. There was no written gospel then as there is now in the New Testament Scriptures; and the meaning of the text is, Christ preached, or proclaimed the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God. *When he retired into a desert place, the people followed him, and he spoke unto them of the kingdom of God.* His instructions to his first preachers were, to heal the sick, and say unto the people, *the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*

The whole church was instructed by our Savior, in the prayer which he taught his disciples: to pray for the coming

of the kingdom of God—*Thy kingdom come.* The idea amongst Christians, that the gospel system is this kingdom of God, spoken of by our Savior so frequently, and that the miraculous effusion of the Holy Splrit on the day of Pentecost, was the opening and setting up of that kingdom, is entirely erroneous. The gospel system, as it is called, is designed to qualify man for that kingdom ; it teaches us what we are to do to enter into that kingdom, and holds up the lamp of life to direct our steps through this world, to that more glorious state of man's existence on the earth. This has been the whole scope and design of Christianity, and will be until the end of the gospel day comes, when its efforts will cease, and those who have followed its light and have been saved by its teachings, will take their place in the kingdom of God.

We frequently meet with such sayings as these, in the words of our Savior : *The kingdom of God is at hand—The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you—Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.* He refers in the first two sayings, to the order of God's dispensations, and not to any particular limit or period of time. The kingdom of God is at hand, or has come nigh unto you, because it will succeed and be next in order to the Christian dispensation, which has now commenced ; and he said to one : *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God ;* he referred to those principles of faith and righteousness which he saw growing in the heart of that individual, and which would result in qualifying him for a place in that kingdom.

Whenever the Lord speaks of taking possession of his kingdom, he invariably speaks of himself as *coming* for that purpose, not that his people are going to that kingdom, but that he is coming again, to receive them to himself. *When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and*

*sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* By virtue of the heirship spoken of by the apostle—*heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*, the saints of the Most High will possess the kingdom and reign conjointly with Christ. This is the opening of the glorious kingdom of God, given to us in the words of our Savior himself ; and the prophet, in the Apocalypse, reflects the same scene from his prophetic mirror, with the grandeur of majesty itself : *And I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them* * * * *and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.* This is the great company of the redeemed, which the prophet saw and heard, in the fifth chapter and tenth verse, as the grand chorus rolled out from their innumerable harps and trumpet songs—*Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation ; and hast made us unto God, kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth.*

The design of the Creator in bringing this world into existence was, that his glory might be manifested by an order of intelligent beings, only a little lower than the angels. Does not Christ say this in the language which he will address to the righteous when he shall sit upon the throne of his glory ?—*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from* (or at) *the foundation of the world.* The world was founded, and the magnificent drapery of the visible creation was hung around it, to be the abode of beings created in the image and likeness of God.

This is the same earth that Adam dwelt upon, in the purity and simplicity of his paradisiacal state ; the same earth that the antediluvians inhabited for seventeen hundred years, amongst whom Enoch walked with God three hundred years. It is the same earth that was drowned by the flood ; the same earth that the Son of God came from heaven, and dwelt upon in humble companionship with men—the same earth in which he attested his power and Godhead by mira-

cles, then yielding up his life on the cross, and rising again from the dead and living and conversing with man as he had done before his crucifixion ; then, in their presence, ascending up into heaven out of their sight ! and it is the same earth on which he will appear again the *second* time, in glory, when the kingdom of God will come, and his people will be forever with their Lord. And I will say further, that there is no revelation made to us in the word of God, of man's future happiness, that is not limited to this world—this material universe. I do not say that man's eternity of bliss is to be enjoyed in this world alone, but I say that the revelations of the Bible in respect to this future happiness, does not reach beyond this world. Future revelations will be made to him on this subject, as the enlargement of his spiritual capacities will enable him to comprehend them.

Having, as I think, clearly established the connection between the thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints, and the kingdom of God, showing them to be one and the same, and that this earth will be the theater of that glorified state of the saints—I now proceed to show, more at large, what we learn from Scripture, to be the purpose of that kingdom, and what will be the physical or sensible appearance with which it will come.

The present gospel dispensation is not calculated to effect the full attainment of man in the great spiritual perfection for which he was created. It answers the end of its appointment in teaching the way to this perfection, and providing the means and helps to put man forward in that way.

Clogged as the soul of man is with the cumbrous weight of mortality, with temptations and allurements of the senses, the pain and agony of disease, and the ties and sympathies which bind him to earthly interests, it is impossible for him in such a state to attain the maturity of those powers and principles of his nature which are to give him his rank next to angelic beings in the order of the divine government. He must occupy another position, where he will be freed from such em-

barrassments, and where every circumstance and influence that will surround and affect him, will promote his purity and expand his immortal nature.

The apostle, in the thirteenth chapter, 1 Cor., argues to this same point. He there contrasts the two states, and sets forth in strong colors the superior advantages of the next state over the present one, in perfecting the moral and spiritual nature of man.

He begins this contrast at the eighth verse, and states that all our worldly attainments will fail and vanish away. And to give a distinct idea of the imperfection of all that man can acquire in the present life, he says : *We know in part only; we see through a glass darkly*, and of course can have but an imperfect view of things ; using objects of sense to illustrate spiritual things ; and those objects of sense, seen through a darkened or discolored glass, give us a very imperfect idea of their true form and proportions, so spiritual subjects are but partially understood even by the most enlightened understandings. But this will not be the case in the next world, or the next state of man's existence. *There we shall see eye to eye, and we shall know even as we are known.*

The apostle further illustrates the superior condition of man in that world by the natural growth and expansion of the human mind in this present life. He says : *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.* His argument is this, that in the next state in the next world man will be as much superior in moral and intellectual greatness to what he is now, as manhood here, in the richness and maturity of its intellectual powers, is superior to the condition of childhood.

In the present state we know in part, we prophecy in part, because, from the nature of things and the constitution of man, everything is imperfect. But when that state which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part, or imperfect, will be done away, and man will enter into that state of being

where his moral and spiritual powers will meet with no obstruction to their development, and his physical nature will be in harmony with the glorified body of his Lord.

The apostle, in these illustrations, is reasoning upon the continuous being of man, and shows what he is in this world, and what the same man will be in the next world ; and from his reasoning we must conclude that the moral and spiritual perfection of man's nature is not to be looked for in the present world. In his Epistle to the Philippians, (chap. 3,) the apostle gives his own experience on this subject, and most distinctly says that he had not attained to this perfection, and clearly intimates that he does not expect it here. He says : *This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind*—not looking for the full development of my moral and spiritual nature in the present dispensation, and reaching forth unto those things which are *before—I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* His whole soul seems to be engaged in urging itself onward to that state where his perfected nature will ever enjoy the glories of the high calling which God has given to all men in Christ Jesus.

The vehement desire—the earnest pressing forward to the things before, or in the future state, expressed by the apostle, were very appropriate to him ; for St. Paul was the only man, perhaps, who was ever favored with so full a vision of that state, and permitted to return to earth again. I shall merely give the apostle's own account of that vision now, but will make further use of it hereafter. In the 12th chap., 2 Cor., he says—*I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell ; or whether out of the body I cannot tell : God knoweth,) such a one caught up to the third heavens. And I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth.) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

No one doubts that St. Paul was the man here spoken of.

He gives a sufficient reason for not proclaiming himself as the man who was caught up to the third heavens, and the things he heard and saw there. He says it was not lawful for a man to utter what was heard there, meaning the whole vision, or the revelation thus made to him. It would have been very unsafe for the apostle to have repeated what he saw and heard in the third heaven ; for his countrymen, the Jews, were still burning with indignation against Christ, whom they had recently crucified, and if St. Paul had told them that he had seen Him they had put to death on the cross, enthroned in glory, they would have put him to death likewise. The apostle's ministry would have been at an end with the Jews if he had uttered what he saw ; it was therefore expedient that he should be cautious in speaking in his public ministry of the things that had been revealed to him. The simple story he told of his miraculous conversion, excited their passions, and they cried out—*Away with such a fellow, it is not fit that he should live.*

Throughout St. Paul's writings, when he speaks of the next world, he speaks with the directness and familiarity of its glory and perfection, that we should expect from one who had seen it all. He tells us of the spirits of the just made perfect there ; and of the glorious body of the Lord Christ, and that flesh and blood, or man in his present nature, cannot inherit or exist in that kingdom ; and many other things he says of the next state of man's being, which we do not find in the writings of the other apostles.

St. Peter refers to those bold and lofty descriptions of his brother apostle, expressing his admiration of the wisdom of Paul's writings, especially of the profound knowledge he evinced in all those things that St. Peter had just spoken of in the five or six preceding verses of the chapter, and says, there are some things in Paul's Epistles *hard to be understood.* Because, they refer to those scenes which were *revealed* to the apostle in the third heaven—subjects that no human mind could ever have discovered.

But the glories of the next state of man's being, together with some idea of the order and government which will characterize it, were to be a part of the gospel teaching—the church was to be indoctrinated in the nature and design of the third heavens, or the kingdom of God, so far as it could be made known to man in his present state. It was therefore proper, that the apostles should receive those mysterious revelations, that they might use them in instructing the church.

St. Paul designates his vision both by the *third heaven* and *paradise*, corroborating what I have said respecting the regeneration of the earth and the restitution of all things, when the world would be restored to what it was when it came from the hand of the Creator, who pronounced it—*very good!* It was there—Paradise! And the thousand years' reign will be also the *third heaven*. The Jewish economy was the first heaven—the Christian dispensation is the second heaven—and the kingdom of God, or the thousand years' reign of Christ, will be the third heaven. This third heaven St. Paul was made acquainted with by the vision he speaks of.

His was not the only revelation made to man of the future glory of the saints, but, it was probably the most comprehensive and particular. The glories of the next world were very partially revealed to Peter and James, and John, long before the vision of St. Paul.

This great apostle says, he was as one born out of due time. The other apostles had lived in familiar intercourse with the Lord—had been taught the purpose of his mission and the doctrines of salvation from his own mouth; and had received, while the Savior dwelt amongst them, a revelation of the kingdom of God. But, although St. Paul had not enjoyed any of those early advantages which fell to the lot of his brethren, he tells us that deficiency was fully made up to him by revelation. He had also seen Christ, who mercifully arrested him and spoke peace to him, while on his way to

persecute the saints at Damascus; and then he was also made personally acquainted with the kingdom of God, by the unspeakable grandeur of his exaltation and vision, in the *third heaven.*

The revelation made to the three disciples above-named, of the outward glory of the kingdom of God, is recorded by Matthew, in these words: *For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.*

The evangelist immediately proceeds to show how this saying was fulfilled:

1. *And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, (his brother,) and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart,*

2. *And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

3. *And behold there appeared unto them Moses, and Elias talking with him.*

4. *Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles: one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.*

5. *While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

6. *And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.*

The first impressions made upon the mind of the disciples by the commencement of this manifestation were impressions of joy. But as the representation increased in its glory, and they beheld the face of their Lord kindling into the brightness of the sun, and his raiment growing into a fabric of pure light, then, looking up and around, they saw the whole mountain canopied by a cloud, with the very brightness of heaven in it; and while it filled everything about them with

its unearthly effulgence, a voice, as unfamiliar to human ears as the cloud was to human eyes, announced, in tones of thunder, *this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him,* their joy was converted into dread, and, no longer able to look upon a scene of such overwhelming magnificence and grandeur, they fell upon their faces, amazed and confounded.

St. Peter makes use of this august scene, to confirm his words respecting the coming kingdom of God in his second Epistle: *For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty; * * * when we were with him in the holy mount.*

This was but a miniature representation of the outward or sensible appearance of the kingdom of God, restricted and adapted to mortal eyes; and yet mortal eyes could not endure the sight. If even this small glimpse of the glory which will fill and distinguish the kingdom of God could not be looked upon by mortal eyes, well might St. Paul say, *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.*

In order to dwell in that kingdom, we must have a physical organization adapted to its glories: we must have bodies of very different powers and capabilities from those we now possess. The *image* of the *earthly* cannot be borne there; we must bear the image of the Lord from heaven; yea, we must be like unto his *glorious body.* This is the resurrection body.

The next inquiry connected with this subject is, who will dwell in this kingdom of God, and with what body will they come? This leads to some reflections upon the resurrection, which will occupy a separate chapter.

## THE FIRST RESURRECTION; OR, RESURRECTION OF THE JUST.

From what I have said on the subject of the millennium, it will appear that the resurrection is the epoch in man's

existence which introduces it. It cannot be supposed, that so great an event in the being of man, as his Resurrection, or his new life, would have been left out of the visions of the Apocalypse. The glorified state of man's existence, after his present mortal life, is evidently intended to be represented in the fourth verse of the twentieth chapter. Christ and his apostles have said much on this subject, and held it up as a fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion ; and the Apocalypse, as I have before remarked, seems to be a pictorial, or scenic, representation of what they taught.

4. *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

The prophet by this description of those he saw living and reigning with Christ, does not refer to the martyrs only ; this worship of the beast and his image, and bearing the mark of the false religion which they represent, draws the line of distinction between the godly and the ungodly. And to the righteous *only*, does the prophet's description apply. *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.*

If it is contended that this is merely an allegorical resurrection, and means nothing more than the ultimate triumph of Christianity over the errors and superstition of all false religion—what will be said of the second resurrection which takes place at the end of the thousand years? That must be allegorical too ; and, if both are so, there would be no resurrection at all. And if the first-described resurrection is allegorical, and the last one literal, then there would be a resurrection of the ungodly only—and no resurrection of the *just!* But what does Christ say, and his apostles, on this subject? All they say is summed up by the prophet in this short sentence of the sixth verse : *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*—that is, the just—the righ-

teous—the children of the kingdom only are the subjects of this first resurrection. And, to make the distinction more emphatic, the prophet says, in the fifth verse: *But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished.*

Christian doctrine, as well as the history of earthly governments, are represented in the Apocalypse in symbols, figures and metaphors, when they can be represented in that way. But, can we conceive of any figure or metaphor, that could adequately present the resurrection to our view? There was but one way in which the resurrection could be seen, and that was in the simple facts as given by the prophet:—*Once I saw the people of God persecuted and cruelly tormented by men, their names cast out as evil, and themselves banished from their country and kindred, and beheaded* [a general term for martyrdom] *for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. But now I behold them in the kingdom of God, living and reigning with Christ a thousand years.* This the only representation the prophet could give of the resurrection—this is all that he could say about it. And while he gazed upon this scene of the future and glorious life of the righteous—looking out upon it from the solitude and banishment he was then suffering for the testimony he had borne to the truth of Christianity, what transports of joy must he have experienced under the assurance that he would have his portion amongst them?—that the solitude of Patmos would be exchanged for the unspeakable glories of the kingdom of God—the thousand years' reign with Christ and his saints.

As this vision represents a subject of greater interest to the church than any other that has yet been under our notice, I wish to enter upon its discussion understandingly. And, the first point to be settled is: what is meant by the resurrection?

This question to the generality of Christians may seem to be a very singular one, and they at once answer it by saying: "Why, does not everybody know that the resurrection

"means the rising again of the bodies of all the dead at the "day of judgment, according to the words of the Lord? "*All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of* "*Man and shall come forth?*"

This is the popular opinion of the resurrection, and it is precisely the opinion that was entertained of it by the Jews, as far as they believed in the resurrection at all, and it has come down with the current of Christian belief with such force that it will require a strong effort to stem the current, and overcome its effects upon our judgment and our faith.

That the Jews and early converts to Christianity held opinions on this subject not entirely free from error, we must infer from the words addressed by our Savior to Martha, on the occasion of her brother's death; as well as from the elaborate and philosophical argument in which St. Paul vindicates the true view of that subject, in his epistle to the Corinthian Church.

When Christ assured Martha that her brother should rise again, she replied, according to the Jewish belief respecting the resurrection: *I know that he shall rise again in the resur rection at the last day.* Jesus answered her and said: *I am the resurrection and the life.*

Now, if Martha's belief had expressed all that was embraced in a proper view of the resurrection, what necessity was there for these words of our Savior? He evidently intended to give the mind of his infant church a new direction and a new impulse, and to prepare it for the fuller instruction that would be given in the apostolic days on that subject.

To answer the preliminary question above stated, I will say, that the resurrection is simply a change in the mode of man's existence. And I hold that the present body of man, which dies and goes to corruption, will never be reänimated; *it* will never perform the functions of life again. It has served its purpose in carrying the man through his mortal state; but as it has no adaptation suitable to the immortal state—that state which flesh and blood cannot inherit or

dwell in—it is laid aside, or exchanged for a new body fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.

This probably explains the sense of Christ's words to Martha: he is the model or standard of the resurrection order of existence, according to the illustration which he gave to the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration.

But the very brief account which our Lord gave to the Sadducees of the resurrection state, shows it to be a state of existence so different from the present, that all idea of the present body must be utterly excluded from that state. We will hear our Savior's words about it. The Sadducees denied the resurrection in any form whatever, and they attempted to refute this doctrine of the Christian faith by adducing the case of the woman who had been the wife of seven husbands, saying to Christ, *Whose wife will she be of the seven in the resurrection?*

The reply of the Savior was: *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God; for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.*

In this exposition of the ignorance of this unbelieving sect, we learn that the next state of man's being will bring him into a resemblance to angelic beings. His moral likeness to them will be in their angelic purity, and in their superior intellectual powers, while the physical organization of the resurrection man will be like unto the glorious body of his Lord. Of course, the passions, the appetites and desires of the present body, will make no part of the resurrection life, nor can this body in any way serve the superior interests of that life.

The apostle, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, in the fifteenth chapter, lays this down as an indisputable principle, that the corruptible body which the man now wears is not the body that he will appear in in his resurrection state. This is his position, and he argues at length in that chapter to establish it.

It is very evident that he is contending against some erroneous views on the subject of the resurrection entertained by Christians ; and from the direction which the course of his argument takes, we see very clearly that the error consisted in supposing that this present body is to identify the man in his resurrection state just as it does in the present life.

I need not reiterate the fifteenth chapter of the first Corinthians—it is easy to refer to it. I will only take such points of the apostle's argument as apply directly to the question before us.

A part of the chapter is employed in refuting the Sadducees who, no doubt, followed up the church in different places with their old heresy on this subject ; but he afterwards refers to those who, admitting the resurrection, could not conceive how man, who lived in a mortal body here, could ever live in any other body than the present one, even in the next world. To remove such doubts and difficulties from men honestly inquiring after truth, the apostle's argument is in point.

The cherished idea that the resurrection will restore those mutual ties and friendships which now make the society of this world delightful to us, but which will be severed by death, is probably the greatest difficulty we have in giving up these present bodies, in which we have known and loved our earthly friends, for bodies of which we are not able to form any conception. The impression which such a change makes upon us is, that with these new bodies we should be estranged from one another, and the ten thousand incidents of the happy hours of life in this world would be lost, and with them much of the happiness of the resurrection state would be lost.

No doubt, the happiness of heaven, with a great many very good Christians, has been too much mixed up with scenes and occurrences of the present life—too much earth has been carried to heaven in our thoughts to be used in making up its felicities. But let these pass with one remark : it will be

impossible to lessen our happiness by any exchange we may make of earthly things for those that are heavenly.

The second branch of the apostle's argument is addressed to those who hold the opinion that the present body would rise again ; and their difficulty in believing in any other resurrection is expressed in the question they ask. Their question may be paraphrazed thus : "If the present body is not raised "again, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do "they come ?"

The apostle meets the inquiry with an expression which, in our language, would hardly be civil, and certainly not courteous. But this polished and refined embassador of Christ meant nothing offensive in the use of the term *fool*. *Thou fool*, (he said, but the understood meaning of the word, when he spoke it, was simply the want of an understanding,) *thou dost not understand this subject. I will illustrate it by things natural and familiar.* Then he goes on to show the process of vegetation—the gay and fragrant flowers we so much admire, the rich and luxurious fields that wave their golden harvests and bless the husbandman with an abundant reward for his toil. None of these, he says, are the body thou sowed. That body, or seed which thou sowest dies and goes to corruption ; but that which thou seest is a body that God giveth it : the beauty, variety, and excellence, which rise from the small seed cast into the earth, while it shows the miraculous power of God, who gives it this body, is at the same time a fit illustration of the superior excellence and glory of the resurrection body over the decaying and corrupt body of man's mortality.

The apostle then proceeds, by a series of antitheses, to show that the resurrection body is not that body in which the saints shall appear in the kingdom of God.

The term *raised*, as used by the apostle, has a wrong application given to it by literal resurrectionists. They hold that this new body must come out of the grave, because the apostle says, *it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body,*

&c.; and they conclude that, of necessity, the same body that was sown must be the body that is raised, with some slight changes or modifications. But this is entirely opposed to the illustration he has given from the process of vegetation. The seed, he says, that was cast in the earth, died, was decomposed, and resolved into separate elements, and was no longer a seed or body. It did not come up above ground again, and *then* undergo the changes and modifications which produced the splendid flower or the nutritious wheat, &c., with all the rich variety of forms and colors with which they are adorned.

The apostle gives a rapid sketch of the difference between the two bodies: *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.*

The terms *sown* and *raised* are to be regarded as terms of accommodation adapted to our present views and feelings relative to the death of the body.

But if we clothe the true meaning of the apostle in terms appropriate, his language would be: "The body of man dies "and goes to corruption; but the same conscious, intelligent "being, shall appear in glory with Christ in an incorruptible "body. His body, in this life, is dishonored by loathsome "disease, becomes offensive and disgusting to his best friends "so soon as death fastens upon it; but in the next world he "will appear in a glorious body, never to be touched by dis-"ease or death. It is here a feeble body, its strength last-"ing but a few days, and his childhood and old age mere "weakness—a mere natural body, and as such, subject to "the wastes and decays common to natural things; but "when he appears in his next state, to reign with Christ a "thousand years, he will have a spiritual body, and will be "as the angels; he will live in undying vigor, and flourish "in immortal youth."

Such is the difference between the body in which we now

dwell and that we are to have in the day of Christ's appearing.

Looking at the two states as the apostle has contrasted them to our view, we lament the idle fictions with which poetry has distorted the sublime and giorious scenes of the resurrection.

A certain poet has entertained his readers with a flight of different members of the human body, whirling through the air, or dragging themselves over battle-fields, looking for their fellow-members—the head looking for the body, the body looking for its limbs, and the limbs looking for each other. How shockingly have men trifled with the word of God, and clothed revelation and Christianity with an attire the most absurd and ridiculous!

There are yet some other views of the resurrection given by the apostle in this wonderful chapter to the Corinthian Church, which I will just add by way of completing the argument.

He says: *There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.* Adam illustrates the natural body and Christ the spiritual. *The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.* He then gives the order in which the two stand: *Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.* He is now showing the two states of man's existence on the earth. *The first man is of the earth, earthy*—that is, Adam, from whom we derive our present *mortal body. The second man is the Lord from heaven*—that is Christ, who came down from heaven. *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are* [or will be] *they also that are heavenly.* Now the conclusion—*And as we have borne the image of the earthy* [in our present state of mortality] *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;* in our next state. And he concludes the whole with this declaration: *Now this I say brethren—that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* This corruptible matter of which

our present bodies are composed—our *earthy* nature, never can be conformed to the image of the Lord from heaven. We shall leave these in the dust of the earth whence they came, and enter the kingdom of God with bodies spiritual. powerful, glorious and immortal, like unto the glorious body of the Lord from heaven.

I have said that the resurrection is a change in the mode of man's existence, and death is not necessary to this change. The resurrection state will be entered by multitudes who had not known death. This is established by another disclosure which the apostle makes to the whole church—*Behold*, he says, *I show you a mystery! We shall not all sleep.* All Christians will not have died, and be sleeping in their graves when this appearing of Christ shall take place. *But we shall all be changed! in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised* [or appear] *incorruptible, and we shall be changed*—shall be brought into the same incorruptible state without passing through death. *For this corruptible*—[those that are dead] *must put on incorruption, and this mortal* [the living] *must put on immortality.* This change conforms us to the likeness of the glorious body of the Lord from heaven; and this is the resurrection. Job does not contradict the views I have expressed on this subject, when he says—*In my flesh I shall see God*—if his meaning is properly taken. Job, 19th chap.

Job was an instance of that light, which through successive ages of the world has now and then flashed upon the darkness of its moral night, arresting the low and sensual current of men's thoughts, and giving them a heavenly direction. He lived in a day of small revelation, and of imperfect views of the providential dealings of God with men. The well-meant, but inapplicable counsel of his three friends shows this to have been the true state of religious knowledge, even amongst the best of his cotemporaries.

The history of Job is a volume of instruction. There is a moral grandeur in it which distinguishes him amongst the

men of that far-off day. We see him thrown suddenly from the highest state of wordly prosperity into abject poverty; his health gone and his body wasted and shattered by consuming and tormenting disease. The ease and splendor which attended oriental wealth, were exchanged for the grief and destitution implied by sitting in the ashes. And, in place of the affection and sympathy which usually consecrate the couch of the sick husband; and, instead of the tear of sorrow, which in silent eloquence responds to the groan of the sufferer, he hears the rough tones of impatience and peevishness from her who had been the glory of his house and the light of his heart—*Curse God and die!*

His three friends, in their religious zeal, wholly mistaking his case, harass his righteous soul by pressing upon him inapplicable truths. With inimitable patience he hears their lectures, and modestly points out their error. But they are not convinced that their wisdom is at fault, and redoubling their efforts, they urge guilt upon the patient sufferer—with the intimation that he was a dissembler; and, although he had concealed his crimes from man, yet he could not deceive God, whose judgments had arrested him for them.

Stung by these cruel insinuations, and despairing of convincing them that they were ignorant of his moral condition; his righteous soul, swelling with pious indignation at the unkind treatment of his friends, and forgetting the pains of his body in the keener pains of his wounded spirit, he exclaims: *You treat me cruelly, you falsely impeach my integrity; but I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon this earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

In this expression, uttered by Job, under circumstances of extraordinary trial, we see his entire belief in the future state; and that in the day when there will be no mistake about character, he will stand justified before his Redeemer. Although this body will become the food of worms, and will pass into corruption, yet with my present consciousness

of what I am, *I shall see God!* That was knowing enough and saying enough for the occasion.

No revelation had been made before the days of the apostles, as to the body in which the saints will appear in glory. Job, not having any special revelation on this subject, as the apostles had, long after his day, employed such language in expressing his faith in a future life as was consistent with the imperfect views of his time.

Job had just uttered the decree of nature's law, as applicable to all flesh—*Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return*—the worm and corruption shall consume this body; yet, he says: *in my flesh I shall see God.* Reason and revelation both suggest the meaning of Job to be—yet in a suitable body; with a full consciousness of my individual nature and being, I shall see God.

As before said, it was not revealed in the days of Job what body the saints should wear in the resurrection state. That was reserved for the light of the gospel day. *Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel.* What was darkly, or but dimly seen on this subject in former times, is now made luminous. Hence we do not hear the apostles in their day speaking as Job did, in vague and uncertain terms, as to what the body of the saints will be in the resurrection; they boldly declare the truths of a later revelation—*Flesh and blood* [or this mortal body] *cannot inherit the kingdom of God. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* Our vile body shall be *exchanged* for a glorious body like unto his.

The resurrection *of the dead*, is the common scripture phrase; but the resurrection of *the body*, is a term not used by our Lord or his apostles. The apostle, in the argument addressed to the Corinthian Church, speaking of the resurrection, does once use the word *body;* but he qualifies it by saying, it is a *spiritual* body—*It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.*

The sense in which the apostle should be understood in this argument is, that he is speaking of mankind as an order of beings, existing in a mortal body, adapted to its present state; and that this body is constantly falling to the earth by death, as the seed is sown broadcast upon the ground. Thus, he says : it is sown in corruption—it is sown in dishonor—it is sown in weakness—it is sown a natural body. These are the characteristics of the being in his present mortal state, but when he appears in his immortal state, the body he will then wear will be incorruptible—glorious, powerful, and spiritual. It will not be the present body, reconstructed and remodelled ; it will not be the material of the present body converted into spirit ; but it will be a new creation, as different from this body as the Lord from heaven differs from the first man who was of the earth, *earthy.* As God giveth to the seed a body of beauty and richness, and fragrance, that made no part in the seed that was cast into the earth, so will he give to man in his resurrection state, a body—incorruptible, spiritual and glorious.

It will be objected to this view, that it does not harmonise with the words of our Savior, speaking of the resurrection in St. John, 5 chap. : 28 : *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.* But if we limit this coming forth of the dead to those who are in the graves, how many millions of human beings will not come forth ? because they never were in graves ! Millions that have been destroyed by fire, or by water, or devoured by beasts and birds of prey, must be overlooked, if only those in the graves are to hear this voice and come forth.

There is no way of avoiding this difficulty, if we insist upon a rigid *literal* construction of the words of our Savior. It is evident that we are to understand the grave to mean all who are under *death*, no matter how they ended their mortal existence ; whether they were borne to the tomb in funeral pomp, or perished in the solitary wilderness—their spirits

live ; and at the appointed time, when that mighty voice will call this earth into its new state, shall be heard, these will come forth in their resurrection bodies, incorruptible and immortal.

The millennial reign of Christ, I have said, will give to man a perfection which he cannot reach in his mortal state. It is in that kingdom of God that the *spirits of the just will be made perfect.* Perfection is frequently spoken of in connection with the present life of man ; but we must understand the term when so used, as implying a perfection only in the man's aims, desires and purposes to glorify God. Here is an instance : *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.* The apostle, in a few verses preceding, says : *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.* Here are two kinds of perfection—one belonging to the man in his present state and the other only to be attained in the possession of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This high calling is the grand end of the Christian's calling—that is, eternal life in the kingdom of God.

Only the righteous will be the subjects of the first resurrection. This is manifest from what has been said of the kingdom of God. The prophet says : *This is the first resurrection ; blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.*

This is fully taught by Christ and his apostles in numerous texts of the Christian Scriptures, only a few of which I shall adduce.

In Luke, 20th chap. : 35, 36 verses, are these words of our Lord, spoken to the Sadducees : *The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage. But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*

1st Corinth. 15th chap, : 22, 23 : *For as in Adam all die,*

*even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming.*

Luke 14 : 14 : *But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

1st Thess. 4 : 14 : *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. * * * For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.*

The first text, beyond any possibility of doubt, limits the resurrection to the children of God—those who will be accounted worthy of that world, by their faith and holy lives in this world. If the ungodly were partakers of this first resurrection, there would be no meaning in calling the righteous the children of the resurrection, as the ungodly would be equally with them, the children of the resurrection. Again, our Lord calls it the resurrection of the just, manifestly distinguishing it from the resurrection of the unjust, which, we are told by the prophet will not take place until the end of the thousand years.

Following their Lord, the apostles also preserve the distinction which will mark the first resurrection—the commencement of the millennium age; and speak of it as the resurrection of the righteous only. St. Paul speaks of the order in which the resurrection will proceed. Christ had risen before the apostle wrote this epistle. *Christ*, he says, *the first fruits.* The next in the order of the resurrection will be those, *who are Christ's, at his coming*, according to the saying of the apostle to the Colossians : *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

How shall these texts be reconciled with the opinion, that *all* the dead are to rise at the coming of Christ? Such an opinion must ever clash with the instructions that are given by our Lord and his apostles on that subject. But with some, the difficulty is overcome by supposing that Christ will bestow distinction and glory upon his servants, by giving them a priority in the resurrection; and they support this opinion by the words of St. Paul: *The dead in Christ shall rise first;* and then will follow, immediately, they say, the resurrection of all the remaining dead.

But they mistake the meaning of the apostle in this expression: *The dead in Christ shall rise first*—the text will best interpret his meaning. 1st Thess. 4th chap. The apostle is describing in this chapter, the grandeur of the scene, when Christ shall appear and receive to his presence and to a participation in his glory, all who had been washed in his atoning blood; those who then will be dwellers on earth as well as those who had died in the faith from the beginning of the gospel day. He says: *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.* This sets forth the august majesty with which the Lord will make his second appearance on the earth. He adds, at the end of this description—*the dead in Christ shall rise first.* He had said in the fifteenth verse: *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.* But those who had departed this life before the coming of Christ—*the dead in Christ; shall rise first*—then we which remain in life, and are in the body at the time of this glorious appearing, shall be changed, and shall be caught up together *with them*, in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; *and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

In Dr. Adam Clarke's note on this text, he says, the word which is translated *prevent* literally signifies *to go before.* The plain meaning of the apostle is: that those Christians who

will be living on the earth when Christ shall appear the second time, will not enter into the joys of our Lord before those who were asleep, or dead—but that these shall rise first, or reäppear, and then all will ascend to meet the Lord in the air.

When the apostle says, *We, which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord*, he evidently did not mean himself individually, for he has been dead more than seventeen hundred years, and the coming of the Lord referred to by him has not transpired yet. It was a common mode of expression with the apostles ; for although they wrote their epistles to particular churches, much of what they said is applicable to other times, and to Christians, in their individual and social state, in ages to come. But on the subject of this distinct and separate resurrection of the righteous, it will be asked by some, does not Scripture declare that there is to be a resurrection of the just and the unjust ? Undoubtedly it does ; but we are not told that the resurrection of these two opposite characters is to take place at the same time. This is nowhere intimated, either by our Lord or any one of his apostles ; but to the contrary, the resurrection of the *unjust* is placed, in the Revelation, at the end of the thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints. Why this great space should separate the resurrection of the just and the unjust, probably will only be understood by those who will have a part in the first resurrection.

If, as has been said, we are now living in a state of heaven and earth, which bears some resemblance to the next, or new heaven and earth, in what will the difference between the two states consist ?

This is a question which it would be great presumption in me to attempt fully to answer ; and in the feeble attempt I shall make to institute a comparison between the two, I feel an awe and reverence, such as that which must have affected Moses when God spoke to him out of the burning bush : *Put*

*off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*

In the first place I would say, that the earth will be, in its renovated state, as different from its present condition as its present condition is from its first creation, *when all the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;* when all creation shone in universal perfection. Whatever the fall of man has introduced, as a consequence of sin, into the present earth, will be wholly unknown to the dwellers in the earth. In a word, and that must suffice on the subject of the physical order of the earth, everything that will be in that earth will minister to the happiness of man.

Man will still be man in that state, having the same identity of being and self-consciousness that he possesses in the present life. But his bodily organization is to be wholly different. In this respect he will be equal to the angels, and be like his Lord. This resemblance between the powers of the body of man in that state and the powers of the body of Christ, is seen in the ascension of our Lord when he left this earth, and the ascension of all in the first resurrection, when the whole church of the redeemed shall be caught up together in the *clouds* to meet the Lord in *the air.*

His appetites are now earthly and sensual, and he is dependent for their gratification upon the very imperfect and often much disordered state of his bodily senses ; but in the new earth his appetites will be refined and spiritualized, and his bodily senses will have a corresponding improvement, and will constantly minister to his pure and lofty pleasures. He will not then be dependent upon those senses which now form the imperfect channels of intercourse between his spirit and the world around him; he will not then realize things through these dark glasses. The spiritual body will have spiritual senses adapted to the free and unembarrassed action of the soul in the constant and ever-renewing developments of its immortal energies.

Thus far we are carried in our views by the instruction of holy men of God, who have spoken for our edification as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

But the question suggests itself to the mind of every one whose hope is full of the prospect of that immortal state, what will be the employments and enjoyments of that glorious state ? When that question is asked I am silent; and turning to the venerable apostle who has been taken into that third heaven, I ask him to answer it. Hear his answer : *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Here the feeble effort to contrast the future with the present state must cease, and I drop the subject, with this one delightful reflection, however : there we shall meet with Christ again, not as he was when upon this earth, but in all the fullness of his glory, and we shall be forever with him.

Christ has directed the hope and the heart of his church to that glorious mansion as the place where he will receive his people to himself, and where he will celebrate with them the triumphs and glories of the church, redeemed and saved by his atoning blood. *I will drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom.*

The employment of men here is in securing those things that minister to the necessities and pleasures of *sense;* but in the next world the spiritual and intellectual cultivation of his regenerated nature will open to him exhaustless and infinitely varied sources of happiness.

In the last familiar conversation that our Savior held with his disciples before his crucifixion, (John xvi.,) there is this remarkable saying amongst others : *These things have I spoken to you in proverbs,* [or parables,] *but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I will show you plainly of the Father*—(verse 25.)

There is a world of meaning in these words. "I teach you "the gospel in parables, because your limited capacities re-"quired the aid of such sensible and familiar objects to enable

"you to comprehend my spiritual meaning. But the time will "come, when I shall see you again, when I will come again to "receive you to myself in the kingdom of God. Then your "spiritual cultivation will not be interrupted by the clogs of "mortality, and the dim lights of your present bodily senses; "you will not then require the use of parables to give you an "understanding of my words; your spiritual perceptions in "that kingdom will readily comprehend the great lessons "that I will teach you, when *I shall shew you plainly of the* "*Father.*"

"The eternity of God! the glory and harmony of his "divine attributes—the endless variety and infinite extent of "the thrones, powers, and dominions, which give grandeur "to the boundless universe he has created; and the laws "that govern and harmonize the whole will be the subjects "that will employ and give felicity to your redeemed and "glorified nature for ever."

The thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints upon the earth, is clearly a *preparation* state, just as the present Christian dispensation is a preparatory state for that reign. I have said before that man does not attain his perfection under the gospel dispensation; he only acquires a preparation for the higher school of divine instruction. Our moral and spiritual training in the present life must necessarily be very imperfect, because its government and discipline, as well as its doctrines, have to struggle with the prejudice, the bigotry, and the ignorance of men. This is seen, more or less in the different creeds and services of different churches, and these frailties attach to every denominational system, no matter how sincere and upright the aims of the institution may be.

The question will be asked: If the righteous dead are gone to their reward, what will they have to do with this future state of spiritual training? This question is answered by saying, that men do not step out of this state of error and ignorance, at death, into that state of perfection and glory

which they are ultimately to occupy ; but they enter upon just such a state of happiness as accords with the dispensation under which they lived and the spiritual attainments made by them under that dispensation.

Abraham's bosom expressed, figuratively, the state to which the Jews referred as the soul's rest. The society of Abraham after death, was the highest reward to which they aspired. But the Christian economy points its subjects to the presence and companionship of Christ in the next world. The earlier and darker dispensations had still lower views of the happiness and glory of the future state than those entertained by the Jews, and they were consequently qualified only for an inferior station in the world of spirits.

Does not the apostle express similar views when he is discoursing of the resurrection, in 1st Cor. 15 : 41 : He says—*There is one glory of the sun*—that is the Christian dispensation; *another glory of the moon*—the Jewish dispensation ; *and another glory of the stars*—the days of the Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob dispensation ; now he tells us the use he designs to make of these comparisons—*For as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead.* Those who have lived righteous before God in their different dispensations, have passed into a state of rest, differing in degrees of happiness and glory, according to their different dispensations.

It cannot be supposed that the man who has lived in the midst of heathen idolatry, or the superstition of false systems of religion, although he did fear God and work righteousness, according to the light he had, and was accepted of God, can stand in the resurrection upon an equal footing with the man who had lived and served God in the gospel dispensation. There will be as great a difference in the moral, spiritual, and intellectual character of the two, as there is between the light of the stars and the light of the sun !

The millennium state will be a dispensation entirely free from the errors and ignorance of even the present dispensa-

tion. It will not be a dispensation connected with a *probation;* man can never fall from that state; there his happiness is his improvement—and his improvement is his happiness. Unlike the present state, in which we see everything in doubt and darkness, and are often unable to determine whether what we are learning is good or evil: we shall there learn nothing but pure heavenly wisdom; we shall drink it fresh from the fountain of eternal truth, and not from the distant streams as we do now, too often made turbid and loathsome by the bigotry, the ignorance and superstition of different and jarring Christian systems as they now exist.

Those discordant opinions which different denominations now hold, and urge with impetuous zeal, producing strife and animosity, will not be heard in the millennium state. There, the apostle says, we shall see eye to eye, and shall know even as we are known. No clashing views will ever arise to disturb the harmony of that state, nor will guile or dissimulation ever stain the purity, or deceive the *confiding* spirits that will dwell there.

The great teacher will be Christ himself, and the great subject to be taught, he has told us, will be the power, the majesty, and eternity of God. *I will show you plainly of the Father.*

The effects which the teaching and cultivation of the millennial state will have upon the spirits of the redeemed, are referred to in these words of St. Paul, (2 Cor. 3 : 18): *But we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.* This is not the clouded or dark glass through which we see things in this dispensation, but it is a great and pure mirror, from which is reflected the deep things of God; and while we look into the boundless regions of spiritual life and glory which seem to lie behind it, we receive in our spirits, by its reflex power, the very objects upon which we gaze, and become changed, in the same image, from glory to glory—a constantly-increasing glory and happiness.

All this is necessary to prepare man for the unspeakable grandeur of the revelation which is to be made after the thousand years of Christ's reign shall have ended. But of this I shall say nothing more. There is another subject of great interest to which the prophet makes no particular allusion in this vision, viz.: the conversion or spiritual recovery of the Jews.

The prophet gives merely a general view of the outward appearance of the kingdom of God. He does not speak of the particular employment of those who will reign with Christ a thousand years in that kingdom.

This lack of information, however, is fully supplied by Christ himself, (Matt. 19 : 28): *Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Luke 22 : 30 : *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

From these scriptures it is very evident that the spiritual recovery of the Jews will form a part, at least, of the employment of those who will have part in the first resurrection, of whom the prophet says no more than what is contained in part of the fourth verse of this twentieth chapter: *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.*

I will now speak of this subject more at large.

### CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

Amongst all people and nations where the gospel has been preached conversions to its doctrines have been more or less numerous; religious services have been appointed and churches raised up to teach and preach the Christian religion.

The Jews are an exception to this remark. Amongst them

Christianity has found no favor to this day. The gospel has failed to make any impression upon the Jews generally, and individual conversions to its doctrines are extremely rare.

Those few men who followed Christ in his day, embraced his cause rather as something new, than from any conviction of its truth or divine authenticity. There is not any case of conviction for sin and repentance toward God in the history of these early followers of Christ. They neither understood his divine mission, nor had they the least apprehension of the spiritual regeneration which his religion was to produce in the heart of man.

But their eyes were gradually opened, and they began to perceive, after the crucifixion of Christ, the spirituality of his religion.

The powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit in the day of pentecost, may be taken as the true commencement of the Christian era ; when men first began to discover the application of its doctrines, and first felt the saving power of its Spirit.

But the gospel, preached as it was by the apostles, and attended with miracles, did not produce conversion amongst the Jews to any great extent. The force and stubbornness of their national prejudices, which stood directly in the way of the spirit and design of the gospel, is well illustrated by the case of St. Peter, whose bigotry and monopolizing spirit excluded all other people from any participation in the benefits which Christianity proposed to mankind.

To clear the mind of Peter from those selfish principles, it required the vision of the great sheet let down from heaven, containing all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things, even after he had preached the gospel for several years. And Saul of Tarsus was converted from his fanaticism and hatred of Christianity in a miraculous manner, and not by the preaching of the gospel. If we look at the result of missionary efforts, we shall find that in every Gentile soil where the gospel seed has been sown, it has taken root, and sprung up, and brought forth fruit, in some countries thirty

fold, in some sixty, and in others a hundred fold. But when the missionary goes to the Jews, he casts his seed upon the rocks, where there is no soil ; it takes no root, and the consequence is there is no fruit produced.

The conclusion, which seems unavoidable, at least to my mind, is, that the gospel dispensation will not effect the salvation of the Jews. They have cast it from them, and by the act of crucifying Christ, they have renounced all faith and trust in him as the Savior of man.

Their own countrymen, Paul and Barnabas, after laboring zealously and suffering severe persecution, in trying to draw them to Christ, at length gave them up, and said : *It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you ; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles.* Our Savior, in his last warning, which he addressed to the Jews, setting forth the consequences of his rejection as their Messiah, uses this language : *Behold ! your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you ye shall not see me henceforth, till the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* This desolation has been distinctly marked upon the Jewish history ever since the destruction of their city and government by the Romans.

The Jews were the chosen people of God, and were jealous in all things pertaining to the honor of God and his worship. They enjoyed advantages which no other people did, *because unto them were committed the oracles of God.* They were jealous of his glory and prompt in resenting any indignity offered to his name or his worship.

Their indignation was provoked at any attempt made to lessen the glory of divine majesty. Their religion held to the one true God and excluded all others—*Hear, O Israel! the Lord thy God is one Lord*, was the proclamation of their national faith, in opposition to the religion of the heathen, which had *gods many and lords many.* Any pretension to equality with God, or to any closer relationship to him than

they claimed to enjoy in virtue of the Abrahamic covenant, was deemed by them, presumptuous and blasphemous. It was precisely on this ground that they rejected Christ. *He came to his own and his own received him not.*

The nation was in expectation of the Messiah. Their own prophets had predicted, in glowing language, his appearance, and their countrymen believed implicitly all that their prophets said, as they understood them. But, when the prophets spoke of the *moral* sublimity of his kingdom, and the comprehensive designs of his mercy in subduing all nations to his authority; the Jews mistook their meaning, and gave a temporal application to their words. They expected a worldly prince, who should restore the kingdom of David, and extend his dominion over the earth. They looked for all the regal pomp and splendor which distinguished the throne of Solomon. They expected when their Messiah should come that his advent would be announced to the throne of the Cæsars, with great pomp and ceremony.

But, instead of all this, they were told that their Messiah had come; that he had his birth in the town of Bethlehem, and not even in the respectable state which that small town might be able to afford; but he was born in a manger, and the only announcement made of his birth was made to a few poor shepherds as they watched their flocks at night—perhaps, amongst the poorest people of that country, as their occupation would imply.

All this appearance of poverty in the condition of the Messiah, was so different from the lofty expectations which the Jews had entertained of the glory of his appearance, that they were mortified and confounded, no less than they were chagrined and indignant at the pretensions of so humble a personage to the high claims of Messiahship. It was in vain that an appeal was made to his miracles and his works of mercy, in support of his claims, and in vain was it urged that no man could do such works unless God was with him. The Jews were callous to all such evidence, and in the

urgency of their anger they denounced Christ as an impostor, and charged collusion with the devil in the performance of his miracles. Every fresh evidence he gave of works of mercy or of miracles, in support of his Messiahship, only served to exasperate them the more; until finally they resolved upon his death. Crucify him! crucify him! became the cry of the nation.

This was not an ebullition of feeling by the vulgar mob only, but it was seen in men of station and authority. The most learned in literature and in the law, comprehending the whole Jewish theology, were prominent in their general opposition to Christ and in procuring his death.

Take, for instance, the imbittered zeal of Saul of Tarsus, against all who professed the religion of Christ, and we have a true exhibition of the hostility of the nation towards Christianity.

With feelings of such implacable enmity against the author of the gospel system, is it reasonable to suppose that the Jews could be converted by the gospel? The same animosity that inflamed the mind of Saul of Tarsus, and the high priests, and the Sanhedrim, against Christ and his disciples, is taught to the youthful mind of their posterity. Every Jew, most conscientiously instructs his child in the Jew's religion; and, at the same time inculcates prejudice and animosity against the Christian religion. Here is a double barrier raised against the influence of the gospel in the mind of every Israelite, which the gospel in its ordinary operation, as the means of salvation, cannot overcome.

I do not say the Jew may not be converted miraculously, as Saul of Tarsus was; but such conversions would not be the effect of the gospel, any more than his conversion was.

The conclusion, therefore, seems inevitable, that the Jews, speaking of them as a people, cannot be converted by the gospel. There must be some other means of reaching their hearts than those now known, or their case is a hopeless one.

Just at this point the Apostle Paul comes up—he who

was aforetime the very Saul of Tarsus—who thought, verily, he was doing God service when he was persecuting unto death the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

We see him in the ninth chapter of Romans deeply affected at the almost hopeless state of his brethren, the Jews, as he contemplates the unimpressible obduracy of their minds, and we hear him give vent to his grief in this language : *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.* Again we hear him in the same sorrowful strain in the tenth chapter, pouring out his soul in holy sympathy for his kinsmen : *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved ; for I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge ; for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* This is the point at which his countrymen failed ; they would not receive the man Christ, coming in the form of a servant, as the end of the law, and they rejected him.

In these expressions of the apostle, he is deploring the unhappy state of his countrymen to the Gentile converts of his own day, as well as the Gentile Churches that should afterwards be raised up by the preaching of the gospel.

He well knew the effect which must be produced upon the mind of Christians in all future time by the act of his countrymen in crucifying the Author of the gospel. He knew that it would be looked upon in no other light than a cruel and barbarous transaction, and that it would subject the Jews to severe treatment at the hands of Christian nations, as a sort of retaliation. I need not say how fully the apostle's apprehensions have been realized in the outrages, injustice, and cruelties, which have been heaped upon the Jews in Chris-

tian countries. How they have been denied the political and social rights enjoyed by all other men, separated and set apart as objects of scorn and hatred, their property seized and taken from their possession at the will and caprice of the powers under which they happened to live, by people, too, whose lives, for virtue and morality, bore no comparison with the lives of the Jews.

The apostle labors to mitigate the severity with which he foresaw the cruel act of his countrymen would be visited, upon the ground that blindness, in part, had happened to them, and in that blindness they had mistaken the purposes of God in showing his righteousness to mankind, and went about establishing their own views of what was consistent with his glory and his righteousness. He urges that they were zealous of God, but their zeal was not tempered with knowledge, and finally admits that they had fallen.

But with great tenderness of feeling for his countrymen, he urges the Gentile world to regard them rather with sorrow and compassion than with anger, especially as their fall had not injuriously affected the spiritual interests of the Gentile world, but had rather strengthened them.

The apostle claims the right to speak freely on this subject to the Gentiles, inasmuch as he says: *I am the apostle of the Gentiles; I magnify mine office;* while I implore you to exercise toward my countrymen a forgiving spirit, a generous Christian sympathy. And he urges this further consideration upon them: These natural branches were broken off from the good olive tree, and are scattered over the earth like dead branches which men gather and burn, because of unbelief; and thou hast been graffed into the good olive tree by faith: take heed lest thou also, through unbelief, fall, and so be broken off as they are. *Be not high-minded, but fear.*

After lamenting the sad state of his kinsmen, and frankly acknowledging their fall from the favor and kindness of God, he changes the view of their case, and as if hope had just shed a ray of light over their condition, he exclaims—*I say*

*then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew*, or I should not stand as I do now in his favor. *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed into their own olive tree again, and so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins.* 11th chap. Romans.

In this epistle, addressed to the Romans, was an appeal to all the Gentile world, since the Roman power extended over the civilized world at that time—all were Romans. Nor was the epistle designed to be limited to his day. He spoke to the Gentile Churches which would be raised up by the preaching of the gospel in all future time.

In much of this greatest of all his epistles, he labors to present the unhappy state of his kinsmen, the Jews, in such a light as to conciliate the Gentile Church, and soften the predudices which he saw must arise against the Jews on account of the tragical scenes of Calvary.

His whole argument is prospective, and it is evident that the spiritual recovery of Israel is to come at some future period. When will that be? He tells us that the blindness which hath happened to Israel in part, and owing to which they have stumbled, will remain until the fulness of the Gentiles be come. That is, the vail which is upon their minds will remain until the time appointed for salvation to the Gentiles *is fulfilled*—until the gospel dispensation comes to an end. *The gospel of this kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all people; and then shall the end come.* This end fulfills, or completes the time, or season of gospel mercy to the Gentiles.

The apostle does not say that the Jews will be any better reconciled to the gospel as the means of salvation, when its day closes with the Gentiles; but he says their salvation

will be brought about by other means. *There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.* They will not be driven by calamities, nor forced by the apprehension of divine vengeance, to embrace that gospel, which their ardently-cherished religion and their unconquerable educational prejudices will not allow them honestly and in good faith to receive. They rejected Christ because they believed he was an impostor, assuming a character of divinity, and a relationship to the Deity, which their zeal for the glory and honor of the most high God, would not allow any inferior being to assume. They would not submit to hear one whom they supposed to be a mere man, claiming equal honors with the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob—the God of their fathers, and their God. *For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and that thou being a man, makest thyself God.** Here was the ground of the prejudice which the Jews entertained against Christ. He being, as they supposed, an obscure man, claimed equality with God.

Is it not consistent with the mercy and justice of the Most High, that, since his ancient people fell into darkness, and stumbled from an ardent, though blind zeal for his glory, that some other way should be provided for their recovery than that which they, on that account, are unable to receive? Has he on this account cast away his people? Nay, verily: but *there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.*

The gospel dispensation then, as we Gentiles now have it, probably is not the way by which the Jews are to be brought into the possession of their covenanted spiritual blessings; their day is not yet come. Their deliverer, or deliverance, will come out of Zion. It will be asked, does not the scripture say, that "there is none other name under heaven given

* [illegible] ...mption, and told them he assumed to [illegible]

"among men, whereby we must be saved but by the name "of Jesus Christ?" True, this was the declaration of St. Peter, which he boldly made before the high priests, when they questioned him as to what power, or by what name he had made the lame man to walk. But this does not say that this name is limited in its saving power to the gospel day—that it cannot be effectual in the salvation of the Jews after it has ceased as a means to the Gentiles, when their fullness has come.

And this is precisely what I understand the apostle to mean—this all-powerful name did not avail for the salvation of the Jews, while it was adapted to the Gentiles; but out of Zion, hereafter, it will come to them as a mighty deliverer. It now remains to inquire what is meant by Zion? What is it?—where is it?—and when is it?

This Zion, of which the apostle speaks in Heb. xii., is the antitype of old Mount Sinai, where God revealed himself in such terrific grandeur to his Israelitish Church in the wilderness. The history of that scene is found in the nineteenth chapter of Exodus. I need not repeat it. The grandeur of it was overwhelming; and so awfully sacred was the whole mountain, by reason of the Divine presence, that neither man nor beast was allowed to touch it, under pain of being stoned to death or thrust through with a dart. And in view of the awful symbols of the Divine presence which covered and shook the mountain, Moses himself said, *I exceedingly fear and quake.*

The apostle says, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, when he points the Christian Church to the glorious manifestation of Christ, which will take place when his people shall be called to behold his glory at his second coming, Ye are not come, or will not come, to those scenes of terror, such as were witnessed on Mount Sinai, *but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born,* [first resurrection,] *which are written*

*in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.*

This state can be no other than that on which the people of God are to enter at the close of the gospel dispensation—the resurrection state—the thousand years' reign of Christ. I have dwelt so much upon this state already, that I have nothing further to say about it just now, only to exhibit it as the *Mount Zion*, out of which the deliverer is to come who will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

The state of the Gentile world before and at the advent of the Savior, was unquestionably a state of the deepest moral degradation. Their social, civil, and religious habits, were deeply tainted with gross corruption. A vivid picture of this universal depravity of Gentile manners, is given by the apostle in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.

The Jews, as a nation, abhorred the Gentiles as a profligate, corrupt, and debased race of people, utterly unworthy of any confidence or respect, and only fit to be regarded as "dogs"—the term which they always used when speaking of them.

But these people were objects of God's mercy and of the atonement of Christ. He came into the world in a way adapted to their state. He took upon him the form of a servant. His birth had nothing connected with it but meanness of circumstance; and the poverty of his manhood was expressed by himself in these words: *The foxes have holes, and the fowls of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.*

This appearance of poverty and great inferiority in the condition of Christ, was, no doubt, necessary in the purposes of his mission, and gave him easier access to the Gentile world, who must have felt themselves, in all matters of divine knowledge and religious attainments, infinitely below the Jews. They would the more readily receive the instructions

and yield to the doctrines of one, whose life was so meek and lowly as to be despised by the Jewish nation, as they were themselves.

But, in the eye of the Jew, all this appearance of poverty and willingness to receive Gentiles, and to think as much of them as of the Jews, was the stumbling point. Here they fell into that darkness from which they have not yet recovered.

The Jew was extravagant in self-esteem. His religious pride disdained any association with Gentile degradation; and even an accidental touch or contact with a Gentile, was held to be a pollution which required a resort to ceremonial washings to be cleansed from. These lofty views of their religious superiority arose from their election or adoption as the people of God; and they were proud to trace, from Abraham down to the times we speak of, a line of illustrious ancestors, honored of God more than any other people on the earth.

Impressed with these sentiments, it was natural that they should look with disdain upon any body or upon any system that proposed to bring the corrupt and degraded Gentiles into a participation of the glory to which they laid exclusive claims as the only people of God.

If, instead of the humble condition, the servant-like form, in which Christ came into the world, he had appeared with an angelic retinue and glorious pomp, the Jews would have hailed him as their Messiah, and received him with divine honors.

The *second coming* of Christ will be just such an appearing. There will be nothing of the poverty and humiliation at which the Jews were mortified and disappointed in his first advent.

He speaks of his second appearing in glory in the 25th chapter of Matthew: *When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.* And in the first chapter of the Revelation the same event is announced, thus: *Behold! he*

*cometh with clouds and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.*

Steadfast in their belief in the prophecies of their own scriptures, as they have always construed them, the Jews are still looking for a glorious appearing of their Messiah. They have never ceased to entertain the expectation that their Messiah will come in majesty and great power, and his second advent will meet their highest conceptions of such an appearing. The Jews are specially alluded to in the last of the above texts : *and they also that pierced him shall see him.* And Dr. Adam Clarke, as well as Dr. Benson, renders the text—*all kindreds of the earth—all the tribes of the land.* Thus identifying the Jews in every state of their former condition of civil and religious polity, as those who shall look upon him and wail because of him.

From this *wailing*, the belief has arisen with many, that the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be the signal of distress and calamity to the Jews, beyond that which will be inflicted upon any other people. But there is no authority in scripture for any such opinion. On the contrary, all that we read on that subject is decidedly of a gracious and merciful character in God's dealing with his ancient people.

Their kinsman, the great apostle, St. Paul, while he most eloquently pleads their cause before the Gentile world, at the same time shows that God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew ; and that out of the very event to which this ill-founded opinion looks for the total destruction of the Jews, will arise the Deliverer that shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob ! True, he admits they are branches broken off from the olive tree, and seem for the present to be cast away ; but this, he says, is the reconciling of the (Gentile) world, and when they are received again, what will it be but life from the dead !

Their present casting away is temporary and will continue no longer than the gospel dispensation continues. They

made it necessary themselves. Their obstinate unbelief—their stubborn prejudice against Christianity, blocked up the way of the gospel, and in every way hindered and defeated its effects and influence upon the Gentile nations. These branches which could not be trained to a proper growth, and only prevented the growth of other branches, giving greater promise of fruitfulness, had to be broken off; but when the day of the Gentile dispensation—the gospel day—comes to an end: has had its fullness—then the Jewish branches will be graffed on again. Whose heart does not catch the enthusiasm of the apostle when he exclaims: *Nay verily, God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.*

The words of Christ are to the same effect—*Ye shall see me no more till the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* When will that be? at his second appearing; when every eye shall see him, and *they also which pierced him*, shall look upon him!

The wailing spoken of in the text is not a wailing of terror, but of *grief—sorrow—compunction!* When they behold Christ in the glory of the Father, and all the holy angels with him, and recognise him to be the very Christ whom they rejected and crucified, their grief will be extreme, and they will give utterence to it in lamentation and wailing. When they look upon the majesty and glory that will then distinguish their Messiah, and call to remembrance the scenes of Calvary, and almost the last words he uttered from the cross—*Father, forgive them; they know not what they do;* a wail of penitential sorrow will break from all Israel that will echo mournfully over the whole earth.

Becoming assured that he who left the world with such feelings of compassion for those who crucified him, had returned to earth again with feelings no less merciful and kind, their wailing will end in the joyful exclamation—*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

That the Jews are to have a dispensation peculiarly their own, when Christ shall appear again on the earth, seems

to be well-established by what he said to his disciples: (Matt. 19 : 28 : *And Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in their generation when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

These great subjects of the next life, or the next world, as far as the disciples were able to bear such revelation, were, no doubt, often spoken of by the Savior to his disciples, when they were apart from the multitude, and in his different conversations relative to the same subject, he would very naturally present it in different language. The above quotation gives his words as they were impressed upon the mind of St. Matthew ; and St. Luke, in recording his conversation on the same subject, gives it in the language which most impressed his mind—(Luke, chap. 22 : 29, 30: *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Here is the testimony of our Lord himself, in relation both to the Jews and Christians in his kingdom. The Christians are to occupy stations of preëminence, implied by sitting on thrones ; the reason implied by this is given by Christ : they had followed him in the trying scenes of the gospel dispensation ; suffering the persecutions and trials of an ungodly world, for their faith and obedience to the word of God. They are also invested with the honor of *judging* the twelve tribes of Israel. The words, judging and judgment, I have before remarked, have a variety of meaning, and in the use here made of the term judgment, we must understand it to signify instruction, guiding ; the full administration of laws to effect great moral purposes.

That the Jews will need all this when they enter upon their peculiar dispensation is very obvious, since they have kept themselves excluded from everything respecting Christ, and the great ends of Christianity ; they will be greatly be-

low the rank which enlightened Christians will occupy in point of knowledge in that kingdom.

*The righteous*, our Savior says, *shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*. These are the people who have followed him in the temptations and tribulations of the gospel dispensation. Their minds of course will be more fully imbued with divine knowledge, and their spirits will be in a higher state of perfection, than any people that have not had the light and the instruction of the gospel ; the very trials and persecutions they have had to contend with in their earth's pilgrimage, have tended to confirm and elevate their spirits in righteousness, and to deepen and perfect their experience in that wisdom which is to give them such great distinction in the kingdom of God.

All others who will enter that kingdom, without having had the light of the gospel dispensation, are compared to stars of different magnitude and brightness : *as one star differeth from another star in glory*, so will those saved out of different lands and nations, where the light of the gospel never shone ; they will appear in various degrees of knowledge and purity, according to the light and means they had. Surely no Christian will be offended at this view, which admits into the kingdom of God, those who never heard of Jesus Christ ! Peter was cured of that bigotry which circumscribed and restricted the mercy of God to his own nation, by the great sheet which he saw let down from heaven, full of all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things, and what he saw in the house of Cornelius. As Peter journeyed from Joppa, with the messengers Cornelius had sent to invite him into his house, he wondered much what the vision he had seen signified. He though intently upon it but could find no clue to its meaning, until he arrived at the house of the centurion, where he found a company assembled, the neighbors, kinsmen, and friends of this good heathen, who were invited by him no doubt, to be present on this singular occasion.

Peter entered, and the good centurion met him; and, supposing from the manner in which he had been directed to send for Peter, that he must be some superhuman being, fell down at his feet to worship him. Peter quickly told him to stand up, saying, that he was nothing more than a man himself. Entering into the house with the centurion, and finding many people assembled, he asked for what purpose they had sent for him? Cornelius immediately proceeded to recite that simple and beautiful story of what had transpired in his house four days before. *Four days ago, I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house; and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon, a tanner, by the sea side, who, when he cometh shall speak unto thee. Immediately, therefore, I sent unto thee, and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now, therefore, are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of Gōd.*

Peter stood listening and looking at Cornelius, with great surprise no doubt, whilst the pious heathen rehearsed the circumstances which led him to send men to Joppa to invite the apostle down to Cesarea.

And we must suppose, while Peter was listening to the account the centurion was giving of the manner of God's manifestations to him, his Jewish prejudices began to yield and melt down under the recital, and that tears of brotherly sympathy fell from his eyes as he gazed upon that humble and godly Gentile, whom he had been taught, as a Jew, to regard in no better light than a "dog."

This scene produced an entire revolution in Peter's mind in respect to the people of Gentile lands. We may imagine him speaking to the company, after Cornelius was done speaking to him, thus: "You all know that we Jews consider it "unlawful to keep company with people of another nation;

"that we hold ourselves above all the rest of the world, and "claim to have the exclusive right to whatever favors God "may please to bestow upon men. But I am done with all "such bigotry and exclusiveness now. What I have seen "and heard to-day in the house of this Gentile, satisfies me "that I have been in a great error on that subject. And "now, of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of per-"sons, but in every nation he that *feareth him and worketh* "*righteousness is accepted with him.*

This is the point at which I aimed in bringing before the reader this most interesting meeting between the zealous servant of God under the Christian dispensation, and the no less pious and humble servant of God in a heathen land, who had never heard the gospel.

Upon this broad and comprehensive principle of God's mercy to men of all nations who fear him and work righteousness, the conclusion is unavoidable that there will be many such stars in the kingdom of God, out of many heathen countries, who, like Cornelius, feared God, fasted and prayed fervently, and whose piety was as deep and as sincere as any found amongst Christians. These will shine as the stars, but will be as far below the distinguished positions which will be occupied by Christians, as the stars in their light are inferior to the sun.

A further confirmation of this view of those who will be admitted to that kingdom, is given in the words of our Savior, who said, on a certain occasion, to those who live in the gospel dispensation—for these words of his were intended to apply to the whole period of that dispensation—*There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out.* Not intending to limit his meaning to these patriarchs and prophets in the kingdom of God, but extending it to the multitudes who feared God and wrought righteousness in the comparatively dark dispensations, at the head of which these distinguished worthies

stood; these will enter into that kingdom, while the great majority of those that have lived in the superior light of the gospel dispensation will be cast out or rejected.

But those who come into the kingdom of God from heathen lands will lack the superior light and wisdom which Christians will bring with them from the Christian dispensation, and will shine only as the stars of an inferior and darker dispensation.

It can hardly be necessary to say that the terms, *shine*, *light*, and *brightness*, as applied to the subjects of that kingdom, are to be understood as having a moral or spiritual meaning, and refer to intellectual and spiritual degrees of perfection.

The rank which the Christian will occupy will be far above the rest. *Ye shall sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* They will administer the government of this new kingdom under the supreme authority of Christ himself.

*Judging* the twelve tribes of Israel refers to imparting light and instruction to the Jewish nation, to enable them to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of that kingdom. The twelve tribes of Israel is a comprehensive term, as used here, and probably signifies all who had devoutly worshiped and feared God according to the light they received from the Mosaic economy. The Jewish Church will then stand next to the Christian Church in point of spiritual attainments and the knowledge of God. And as Christianity will then judge or instruct all Israel, so likewise will it govern, judge, or teach all that are saved out of heathen lands, these being as far below the rank or position which Israel will occupy as Christianity will be above it. These smaller stars are comprehended in the greater stars.

Peter, the Christian teacher in the house of Cornelius, instructing the humble heathen who had assembled there, and directing their minds to the higher principles of the divine economy as it is revealed through Jesus Christ, is somewhat of an illustration of what will be the judgment which the saints

will exercise over the twelve tribes of Israel: it will be instructive, elevating, and purifying to the mind. This must be the only kind of judgment that will be known in the kingdom of God.

These will be regarded as hard sayings by those whose opinions of the future state or the next world, are little else than undefined and indistinct notions of a heaven of happiness somewhere or other for the righteous, and a hell of punishment somewhere else for the wicked. Any idea of moral government, such as has been suggested, existing on this earth after what the scripture calls the end of the world, is revolting to these notions of man's hereafter.

The whole world arranged at a judgment bar to hear the sentence which is to fix their eternal state—the burning up of the world, the shouts of the saved, and the groans of the lost, make up their entire views of the future state. That happiness will be the condition of the righteous in the next life, and wretchedness the condition of the wicked, are truths which it does not become men to trifle with. And that these opposite states are connected with the administration of laws, and arise from the necessity of divine government, is too apparent to be matter of doubt.

I have said that the thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints on the earth and the kingdom of God, are one and the same state.

The government of the saints in the thousand years' reign will have the same object as the government of the church by the gospel has, the improvement of man's moral and intellectual nature being the design of both.

But the government in the thousand years will vary from the present economy of the divine government over the world, as it will then apply only to man in his immortal state.

Man, in the present body, is possessed of evil tempers and vicious principles that are ever hurrying him into hurtful and wicked excesses. He is exposed to the temptation of the devil as well as to the allurements of the world that lieth in

the wicked one. Besides this, the wicked are now in authority, and they often exercise their power for the maintenance of vice, and in direct opposition to godliness. All these moral forces and powers have to be met in the present world by those laws of God's appointment having suitable penalties denounced against all iniquity.

But in the kingdom of God, or the thousand years' reign of Christ, there will be none of this. There will be no tempting devil—no corrupt principles or unholy affections, requiring such laws to check or punish them. Man's whole nature then will tend to God and righteousness, as if by the force of gravitation.

But his spiritual and moral powers will then require aid in their development as they do now. Man does not pass out of the present world with all the imperfections of his mortal associations here, and enter into his next state in all the perfections of which his spirit is capable. Nor will he be forced into that happiness, which can be attained only in the next world, by some superior power which he will neither understand nor be able to resist; but he will enjoy the happiness by the exercise of his faculties under the guidance and instruction peculiar to that state. His felicity will be enhanced by the new discoveries he will be ever making in the profound mysteries of eternity; and as he progresses in the wonders of that life, the powers and capacities of his spiritual nature will ever be expanding with new capabilities of happiness. The whole government of that state will tend to stimulate and direct the subjects of that kingdom in their endless progression towards God.

We have made a wide digression since we left the prophet. We must now rejoin his company, and listen again to his symbolical expositions.

We left him where he brought us in view of the kingdom of God—the reign of Christ with his saints for a thousand years. What he saw in that kingdom, and what transpired at the end of the thousand years, he narrates in the conclud-

ing portion of this vision, all of which relates to scenes that transpire on earth.

7. *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*

8. *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

9. *And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*

10. *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented, day and night, for ever and ever.*

11. *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

12. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

13. *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

14. *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

15. *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

The first circumstance which arrests our attention is, that at the end of the thousand years Satan is loosed out of his prison, and goes out to deceive the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven and destroyed them.

This feature of the vision is intended to show that Satan will continue to possess, even in that era of the new heaven and the new earth, the same incorrigible animosity and hostility to God and his government that he has ever manifested since he wast cast out of heaven; and after being restrained or imprisoned a thousand years, he comes forth again with his hellish and unsubdued vindictiveness to make another effort against the dominion of the Almighty in the new world. The prophet represents him as leading up an embattled host, whose numbers admit of no computation. *They are as the sand of the sea*, and are gathered from the four quarters of the earth.

The question will arise, "Where will Satan gather this "countless multitude in the millennium state of the world?"

If the prophet meant literally an organized army, it would be very easy to show where he might muster them. It would only be necessary to advert to the great multitude whose position will be on the left hand, and who will be banished into outer darkness by the sentence of Christ when he shall come in his glory, and call all nations before him. But, if the earth and all that is in it is literally to be burned up, and the righteous only will escape the destruction of that conflagration, by being taken up above the "fiery void;" then, indeed, it would be difficult to answer the question, and say where this gathering of Gog and Magog will be made.

After those who are Christ's at his coming, have been separated from the countless millions of earth's population, there will remain enough to meet the description the prophet gives of the army gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and which went up covering the breadth of the earth, in firm phalanx, surrounding the camp and the beloved city of the saints.

These powers are represented as being deluded or deceived by Satan, and drawn by him into this desperate enterprise against the dominion of Christ, in this new form, in which he reigns over his saints in the kingdom of God. The result is

that this whole combination of powers is suddenly destroyed by fire which came down from God out of heaven.

The saints are not represented as being at all disturbed, or alarmed at such a mighty foe. They quietly dwell in their beloved city and are at peace in their camp. They make no preparations to meet their assailants and repel the assault, for the glory of the Lord is their defense, and they are safe under the shields of Omnipotence.

We have only to substitute *moral* agencies for this great embattled host, and we shall approach nearer to the true meaning of the prophet. It cannot be supposed that a carnal conflict with the saints is meant, after they had dwelt a thousand years in their glorified state. But we may suppose, that under the deceivings of Satan, new and delusive systems of a religious kind, may be organized in opposition to the kingdom of the saints. New doctrines may be inculcated in opposition to Christ's government, to which all the rejected nations dwelling in outer darkness will readily give their assent and zealous coöperation, in the vain hope that they may overthrow the glorious kingdom, the presence of which serves constantly to augment their wretchedness.

It may well be supposed that Satan would devise some such scheme for the purpose of directing and drawing off the saints from their allegiance to Christ in his kingdom. His success in heaven in a similar effort with his associate angels, and again in the garden of Eden, will embolden him in this new effort to overthrow the kingdom of Christ ; and the nations which have been doomed to outer darkness, devoid of happiness, and in utter despair of ever being raised to a better state, will zealously coöperate in any organization that promises to lessen their misery, by employing their powers even in doing evil.

But this effort of Satan and his allies against the government of Christ will avail nothing. The high intelligence and unimpeachable character of the saints in that kingdom, cannot be effected by the profoundest arts of Satan's deceiv-

ings. And this last effort of the unchangeable adversary of God and man is defeated, and the whole combination is overwhelmed in a deluge of fire, falling upon them from God, out of heaven, and devouring them. This strong figurative language conveys, in the most forcible manner, the utter impossibility that any scheme of Satan, to introduce error or sin into the future state, or the next world, as he has done into this, can ever succeed.

The Devil and his angels must have an eternal existence. They have been ever since their fall from heaven, the antagonistic powers of God ; and they have been actively and incessantly employed in promoting rebellion against his government. In this they have been too successful, in drawing man away from his allegiance to his Creator. The Devil is represented as going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and he has enjoyed a malignant satisfaction at every fresh instance of success.

It seems to be a principle of the moral government of God over the world, that a certain degree of liberty should be allowed to those evil spirits ; but they are reserved *in chains*, unto judgment, or the period of their final judgment. They had been appointed to this final punishment as their eternal state ; but, until the time of the *execution* of this sentence arrives, they are somewhat at large, and at times appear to exercise a fearful extent of power. Nevertheless, they are *under chains*, or in chains, by Omnipotent power, and cannot, in their malignant efforts, exceed the length of their chains ; they cannot go beyond the bounds which the divine government has prescribed, and it is well for this world that they cannot.

But we are now approaching a new form of the divine government, which is to be introduced at the end of the thousand years. This dispensation of the government of the Almighty, differs from all others that have preceded it since the creation of man, and any exercise of Satanic power anywhere, or to any extent, within the bounds of this do-

minion, will not be tolerated. No power or influence adverse to God and his government, can be exercised or exist, when this new mode of the divine administration commences—hence the closing event of the thousand years is the casting of *the Devil into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.* Thus the power of Satan to interfere with the purposes of God in his government over the universe, will cease for ever in the unmitigated punishment implied by fire and brimstone ; terms which, more than any other that could be employed, convey the idea of intolerable anguish.

The scriptures nowhere give us a more distinct account of the duration of the millennium state than that which is expressed by the term, *a thousand years*, which we may regard as a definite period used only to express an indefinite period of time. Its actual duration is alone within the knowledge of Him with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. It is of no consequence to us to know what will be its duration ; but what will be done in that state, and what will succeed it, are subjects of revelation, and as such, are proper for man's meditation and inquiry.

In considering this part of the divine economy, we must first attend to what Christ himself says about it, and then hear what his apostles say.

In the fifth chapter of John's gospel, verses 21, 22, Christ distinctly announces that he is at the head of the divine government over man, in these words : *For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*

An equality of divine power with the Father, as manifested in raising the dead, is asserted in these words ; and in administering the kingdom of God over men, Christ declares himself supreme, because all judgment hath by the Father been committed to him.

These fundamental principles of the divine government must refer to the thousand years' reign, since the resurrection, or the renewed state of man's life, takes place at the commencement of that state ; and it is further and emphatically declared to be *the reign of Christ.* The gospel of St. John abounds in sayings which can only be understood by referring them to that period when the full glory and majesty of Christ will be manifested in the kingdom where all judgment will be committed unto the Son.

We learn something more particular respecting the peculiar nature and design of the reign of Christ during the thousand years, from the sayings of St. Paul in the fifteenth chapter of the 1st Cor., the 24th to the 28th verse, inclusive. It is quite clear that the apostle, in these verses, is not speaking of the gospel dispensation.

The resurrection of Christ is first asserted, then the resurrection of them who had fallen asleep in Christ. Christ returns to life on the third day after his crucifixion, as the first fruits of them that slept, or as the earnest or pledge of the renewed existence of all that are his when he shall come again.

But every man in his own order, says the apostle. *Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming.* This introduces the millennium, or the thousand years' kingdom—the reign of Christ with his saints on the earth. But this kingdom, like the gospel kingdom, also has its limit—it comes to an end.

The end of this millennium kingdom will come when the reign of Christ shall have accomplished all that was to be done in the thousand years, having put down all rule, and all authority, and all power. *For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet.* No one properly attentive to the scripture account of the close of the gospel dispensation, will undertake to say that all this will be done under that dispensation. The close of the gospel day, as Christ himself represents it, does not show that all enemies have been conquered

and brought under his authority by the gospel. But he speaks of nations who were his enemies, who would not have him to reign over them, by his Spirit, in the gospel day. These are banished into outer darkness, never again to be brought under Christ's reign, neither as probationers, or the subjects of the happy government of Christ.

But the true meaning of the apostle probably is this, that the reign of Christ will continue until all the subjects of the millennial reign are brought into the perfect knowledge of God, as he is manifested in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews are enemies in this sense, and will be brought to God in this new dispensation.

I have already spoken of the almost infinitely varied character of the great multitude which will make up that millennium kingdom. The prophet labors to convey some idea of that vast multitude as he saw them. He says : *And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.* And the grand acclamation of this countless multitude was, as he heard it : *Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*—Rev. chap. 5.

What a vast variety of intelligence and moral action must such a multitude as this present ; gathered, as they will be, from amongst all the nations, tongues and people of the earth. While some who have lived in the light of the gospel dispensation show their superior advantages by their exalted views of God and his government, there are vast numbers whose moral perceptions of the same subject, and their crude and imperfect attainments in religion, scarcely amount to anything more than the lowest grade of intellectual life—like the feeble light of distant and scarcely perceptible stars. But all having, with humble and upright purpose, feared God and wrought righteousness, according to the best light they had, are brought into that kingdom where the spirits of the just *will be made perfect.*

Over all this mass of mind, imperfect and deformed by ig-

norance and error, as much of it will be, from the want of better light, Christ will reign ; and administer, through his saints of superior rank and intelligence, the instruction in righteousness, and the spiritual influences which will finally expel its darkness and imbue it with the light and knowledge of God and the true glory of man.

All error and ignorance may properly be considered as the enemies of God. Almost all the rule, and authority, and power, by which the religion of Christ is obstructed and opposed amongst men in the world, have their origin in ignorance of God, and in erroneous views of his government. But we frequently see much ignorance blended with great sincerity of heart, and very erroneous views of religion dwelling in minds anxiously desirous to be always acceptable to God. In this life such individuals will probably remain very superficial in their knowledge of God, and very shallow in their experience of those manifestations which he is often pleased to make to his people.

But, in the Millennium kingdom all darkness of whatever kind will be removed from the mind, by the pure and righteous government which there will ever be instructing and expanding the moral and intellectual powers of man ; and where nothing vicious or sinful can ever arise to obstruct or counteract its happy influence. The reign of Christ will put all such enemies under his feet. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death!* This rather confirms what has been said relative to the meaning of the term, enemies. Death cannot be said to be an active opposing power, either of the government of God or his attributes. God appointed death—*It is appointed once for man to die.* Death is an enemy only to man ; he is represented as the great destroyer of the human race. This power of destroying life will cease—will not be known in the millennium reign—*neither can they die any more,* is given by Christ as one of the peculiarities of those who dwell in that kingdom. But still death is not destroyed ; he holds his dark dominion over the millions of the human

race that have died from Adam down to the period when the thousand years' reign will commence. All these must be released—must come into life again ; then shall come to pass the saying that is written—*Death is swallowed up in victory!* referring to Isaiah, chap. 25 : 8.

This final overthrow of death's dominion will take place at the end of the thousand years, when "*the rest of the dead shall rise*, and who did not rise to meet Christ at his second appearing in glory. This overthrow of the last enemy will close the millennium reign—*the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death!* When this enemy is destroyed, and "*Christ has put all things under his feet, then will he deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

This introduces the glory and majesty of the highest state of man's future existence, as it is revealed to him by God. All the blessed who were received into the kingdom of the thousand years, under the reign of Christ, will be prepared for this higher state of glory, when the kingdom will be delivered up to God, even the Father.

The greatest efforts of the imagination must fall infinitely short of a full apprehension of the glory of man's existence in that state. Nothing in the heavens and the earth in the millennial state, will afford any comparison with it. These fled away and no place was found for them, says the prophet. The great white throne is emblematic of the grandeur and purity of the government of the great God, over all and every part of the universe to which he has given existence by his own omnipotence.

This representation does not instruct us that the divine government has assumed a higher and holier character than that which distinguished it before and since the creation of the world. God is unchangeable in his perfection and attributes. But it teaches us that man has reached that exalted state of purity and holiness in his nature, which fits him for,

and elevates him to, this higher approach to God, and more familiar acquaintance with the unspeakable glories of his dominion.

In all ages of the world God has had communications with man ; and, in order that those communications might be adapted to man's very imperfect moral and spiritual perceptions, he has ever employed some medium, as a representation of himself, that man might look upon and converse with him without dread. *The angel of his presence*, was the general designation of those representations.

Such were the three men which appeared to Abraham, and partook of his hospitalties under the oak of Mamre. Jacob held communication with God under similar appearances, particularly at the memorable struggle by the brook Jabbok.

God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, and the journey of the Israelites was frequently marked by such appearances. The cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were constant emblems of the divine presence.

The ark of the Lord became the standing symbol of Jehovah's presence in the Israelitish camp, and continued to be so with the tribes after they had entered into and possessed the land of Canaan.

Such also was the angel of the Lord which appeared to Joshua, in the form of a man of war, under the walls of Jericho.

In all those manifestations of the divine presence there is a perfect adaptation of the symbol or medium of communication to the time and circumstances of the people to whom God speaks ; and in none is such a fitness more clearly and remarkably visible than in this appearance to the captain of the hosts of Israel. Joshua had just led the people over Jordan, and, with sword in hand, proclaimed his purpose of conquering the country of the Canaanites.

He drew up his forces before the strong walls of Jericho, perhaps with some doubts whether he would be able to carry

a city so strongly fortified. Just then there appeared before him a man of warlike appearance, precisely such as Joshua was himself. Joshua soon learned that this was not a mere man, but the angel of the Lord, come to give him encouragement and counsel in the arduous enterprise he had undertaken.

Passing over the Jewish economy, in which the prophets of the Most High stood between God and his people as the channel of intercourse, let us come to the Christian dispensation.

And who is it that represents God in this dispensation? It is Jesus Christ, in his mysterious character of the God-man—God manifested in the flesh—Deity veiled in humanity. He took upon himself the form of a servant, and humbled himself to the condition of mortal man, that men might, *through him*, speak to God, and hear God speaking with them.

Christ makes the way of access to God the Father practicable and easy to sinful man, who never could approach him with entire confidence without such a medium or mediator.

Christ will continue in this same relation to men even in the glorified state of his thousand years' reign; for, as I have before remarked, men carry with them out of this world the same moral and spiritual character which they bore in this life, and there must be the same infinite distance between them and an infinitely holy God when they enter the millennium state as there was when they left the body. I do not mean that this distance between God and his people is a distance produced by sin in the man when he died; but it arises from the feebleness of his moral powers and his spiritual ignorance even in the highest state to which he can attain by grace in this life. All that men will know of God the Father in the thousand years' reign of Christ, will be through Christ, as the medium of communication. Although man's moral powers will ever be expanding, and his conceptions of the divine character will rise higher and higher, yet until he attains the

perfection to which it is the express purpose of that reign of Christ to raise him, he will see God only through the Lord Jesus Christ.

But man will, in the progress which his moral and spiritual nature is to make in the millennium state, ultimately reach that perfection, and possess such a glorious expansion of powers adapted to that world, as will place him upon an equality with the glorified nature of Christ himself.

This I take to be the meaning of the apostle when he says: *And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* We have borne in our body, or earthly life, a resemblance to Christ in his humiliation, so we shall bear his glorious state—we shall resemble him in his highest state of moral and spiritual perfection.

Thus man will be raised from his fallen and corrupt nature; beginning with the work of grace wrought in him here and progressing through the millennium state; he will be changed into the image of Christ, from one degree of glory unto another, as by the Spirit of God, until he reaches that equality with Christ, expressed by the saying of the apostle, when he speaks of what we shall be—*Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* This expresses the idea of the same relationship, which Christ as a Son, holds to God the Father; and an equal participation in the glory and power which he will receive from God in virtue of that relationship. No intervening veil, or medium between God and man will then be necessary. Man will then see and know God as Christ sees and knows him.

This exaltation of man in the high degree of perfection to which his nature will be raised, brings us to the *end* of the thousand years' reign. All its purposes will then have been accomplished, when, as the apostle says, Christ has put all enemies under his feet: *And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be all in all.* 1 Cor. 15: 28.

Having put all things under him, Christ now delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father. The redeemed of mankind, who have been saved by Christ, are now brought into the same relationship to God which Christ himself holds. The purposes of his mediatorial appointment having all been accomplished, that office ceases, and henceforth the divine government is to be administered by God himself. This is illustrated by the *great white throne*, and him that sat upon it.

The prophet could find no better description of the superiority and glory of this government over all that had preceded it, than that which he gives in the expression—*From whose face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was found no place for them.* A figure of speech, which implies, that man will then be raised to an order of divine government, the glory and grandeur of which, has no parallel in any state that he ever experienced before. From *its* presence, all former things disappeared and fled away.

The expression—*Great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the heavens and the earth fled away*, appear to be terms so simple and plain, that we are ready to conclude nothing very remarkable is intended. But we must not judge the style of the prophet as we would the style of common men in their writings. When the prophet speaks of the great subjects of his vision, just in proportion as they rise and swell in grandeur and magnificence, in the same proportion does his language assume the most simple form.

It is said, in the fifth verse of this chapter: *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.* That event now transpires, and the prophet, when the great white throne appears, says: *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.*

Opening books, and names written in books, are usual terms connected with the government of God over the world,

and the exercise of his judgments upon the wicked. They are to be regarded, of course, as figurative, and intended to convey the idea of God's Omniscience! that he knows as perfectly all the acts of men as if they were written in a book. Our courts of law would be very imperfect if the business upon which they acted was not recorded in the books ; much would be forgotten, and the application of the laws would often be erroneous and unjust. But, being matter of record, all proceedings based upon what is written in the books, every one is satisfied that the judgment or sentence of the courts, is just and right.

The divine government, when the great white throne appears, will not admit of the existence of any power hostile to its purity or its laws. Hence a final disposition will then be made of all the ungodly part of mankind, as well as all the spiritual powers combined against God. These are distinguished by the terms—*death and hell.* These, with all who were not found written in the book of life, were cast into the lake of fire.

The term *judged*, evidently means in this transaction—*punished :* consigned to everlasting woe, as is usual in speaking of the state of final punishment, by the term—lake of fire. This is the second death.

It was said of all those who had a part in the first resurrestion—*on such the second death hath no power.* These are they who are written in that book of life spoken of by the prophet. In the twelfth verse, he says : *and the books were opened.* These refer to the mighty throng, which now, after the thousand years, live again, and to the spirits denominated death and hell. But there was another book, distinguished from these already named, and by way of eminence, called the *book of life.* This is the record of all who reigned with Christ in his thousand years' reign. These were not subjects of the judgment; but whosoever was not found written in this book of life was cast into the fire.

*And death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.* This precisely meets the impious declaration of French Athe-

ism, uttered by her priesthood when the smoke of the bottomless pit broke out, darkening the sun and the air.—(chap. 9 : verse 2.) The wild uproar of religious and civil anarchy which distinguished the French Revolution, assailed the throne of God, and threatened the subversion of all civil government.

" Death is an eternal sleep," became the popular sentiment with the French nation, under the intoxication produced by the wine of abominations, with which the woman drugged the inhabitants of the earth.

The moral delirium produced by the corruptions of the Romish Church reacted with terrible effect. The church fell with the civil government, and merged her corruptions in the ferocious principles of the revolution.

This combination of civil and religious anarchy was death to religion and morality. But death shall deliver up the dead that are in it when the great white throne appears.

And hell, too, shall deliver up the dead which are in it. *Hell* signifies opposition to the government of God ; hence the promise of Christ to his church—*The powers of hell shall not prevail against thee.*

All this death and hell shall deliver up their powers, their influence, and shall be cast into the lake of fire—shall be banished forever from the dominion of Him that sits upon the great white throne.

There is another delivery of the dead mentioned by the prophet, and that is from the sea. *And the sea gave up the dead that were in it.* The sea has no sort of relation to death and hell as enemies to God and his government. But it seems to be referred to for the purpose of meeting the particular effect produced upon the mind by the loss of friends on the sea.

When our friends die with us, and we follow them to the tomb, and see them deposited in the calm and peaceful shades of the cemetery, our affections may hover over their tomb, and consecrate the spot where they repose with such em-

blems as best suit the cherished remembrance of their love and virtues. But when a friend is committed to the bosom of the ocean, we know not where he lies ; we feel that he is lost indeed. In vain we look for the place of his repose—in vain we follow the course of the ship from whose deck he was consigned to the deep, and ask, is he here ? or is he there ? The sorrowing heart hears no response but the hurling tempest and the surging billows.

The ocean gives no account to man of the dead that have descended into its depths. But, oh ! thou oblivious sea, although man cannot search, God's all-seeing eye looks through thy abyss ; and when his voice shall call the rest of the dead to life again, its thunders shall echo through thy profoundest caverns, *and the sea shall give up the dead that are in it.*

We have been conducted by a succession of visions, unfolded to the view of the prophet, to the utmost limits to which revelation points in the future history of man's exaltation and glory.

The two closing chapters of the Apocalypse are chiefly employed in giving symbolical descriptions of the perfect and happy state of the righteous in heaven. In doing this, the prophet combines *beauty*, *riches*, and *grandeur*, to an extent almost overwhelming. The appetite for these things is insatiable in man, and for this reason they are appropriate, as sensible objects, to impart to our minds the highest conception which we are now capable of entertaining of the infinite pleasures of the heavenly state. No man can form any idea of happiness in the abstract. He cannot think of it without forming in his mind the image of some sensible object calculated to impart happiness.

When Christ spoke to the people of the operation of the Spirit and the joys of the Holy Ghost, he always employed sensible objects to illustrate his subject. If he had not done so, the people could not have comprehended his meaning. And so with the prophet. After bringing us to the appearing of the great white throne and him that sat on it, from

whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, if he had left us there without any description of that state, we should have been bewildered rather than instructed. But he proceeds in the two closing chapters of his vision to illustrate that state, when man will enjoy the fruition of the glory which will be his inheritance as an *heir* of *God* and *joint heir* with *Christ*.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE HOLY CITY, OR HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

1. *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

2. *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

4. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

5. *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

6. *And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

7. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

The first delineation the prophet gives of the scenes which we are now entering upon are physical, relating to the heaven, the earth, and the sea. He had said in the preceding chapter, in his description of the appearance of the great white throne, *from the face of himself that sat upon it, the heaven and the earth fled away, and there was no place found for them.*

The present act in the great prophetic drama opens with *a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away,* reäffirming what he had said on that subject in the preceding chapter. The new heaven and new earth now spoken of is, probably, something far beyond that change referred to by St. Peter, where he says : *Nevertheless, we look for new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.* This simple fact, that righteousness will be predominant, seems to be the chief distinction in St. Peter's new heaven and new earth. In the kingdom referred to by St. Peter, Christ sat upon the throne and reigned a thousand years. But when that state ends, and *Christ delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father*, then the heaven and the earth fled away, and all things were made new by him that sat upon the great white throne.

There is a remarkable gradation in the divine government, showing three distinct stages. There is first, the government under the gospel dispensation, by the ministration of the Holy Spirit ; secondly, the reign of Christ in the thousand years ; and thirdly, the great white throne, when the kingdom will be delivered up to God the Father.

In these sublime visions of the prophet, we may well suppose that he would employ symbolical language on many subjects, for there are many of his visions which he could not adapt to our feeble apprehension without such language.

I have already said, that the expression, *from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away*, implied no more than that a great change had taken place in the constitution and laws of the material universe, rendering them so much more glori-

ous than their former state was, that the preceding heaven and earth would be quite forgotten. But still the earth exists, and will continue to exist and be the theater of man's glorious existence, even in the highest state of his perfection, as far as it is revealed to us in the volume of inspiration.

There is no annihilation of this earth, either by water or by fire. There are great changes through which the earth and its immediate heavens will pass, we must suppose from the repeated declarations of scripture ; but all these changes will tend to purify it, and increase and perfect its beauty and grandeur.

In the new earth, of which the prophet is now speaking, *there was no more sea.* Some writers have regarded this as a figurative expression, simply designed to convey the idea that all discord and commotion will cease in that world, as the sea is emblematical of turmoil and confusion.

But the prophet certainly means a literal heaven and earth ; and as he speaks of the sea in connection with these, I am constrained to receive what he says of the sea as literal also.

Those mighty oceans which now produce the great geographical distinctions of the earth, and keep nations estranged from each other, and acting as barriers against the practical exercise of those sympathies of man's nature, which seem designed by the Creator to bind the whole earth in one close and common brotherhood of affection, will no longer exist. The elements which in their chemical combination now compose these great seas, will become dissolved, and, under new combinations, will enter into different formations, more congenial with that state of man's existence.

The next object in the vision is announced by the prophet with remarkable emphasis : *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* This represents the church when the spirits of all the just are made perfect in the thou-

sand years' reign of Christ, and the kingdom is prepared to be delivered up to God the Father.

The description of this city is not entered upon immediately, but is deferred until he gets through with his general description of what he saw and heard of the state of the blessed in that new earth.

*He heard a great voice out of heaven*—that is, one universal expression of peace and joy proclaimed that the tabernacle of God is with men ; and he dwells with them in such familiar and intimate intercourse, that the consciousness of their own being is not stronger than the consciousness that God dwells with them and is their God.

*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.*

It is impossible for mortal man fully to conceive of such a state of existence as these expressions imply. A man counts himself happy in this life if one day passes without the occurrence of some event that wrings his heart with anguish, or draws the tear of sorrow from his eyes. But these days of sorrow belong to the present times—to flesh and blood. They will all pass away, the great voice said, for the former things are passed away. Not a vestige of the grief and sorrow known to the former earth will be known in this.

And he that sat upon the throne said : *Behold I make all all things new*—suitable to the perfection and glory of that state to which man's nature will then be raised. The prophet, amazed at the grandeur and magnificence of everything he beheld, was, probably, too much lost in wonder and astonishment, to think about writing down what he saw. But he is commanded to write them. Let the whole church hear them! Spread them out before the eyes of the surviving people of God, who are struggling against the powers of darkness, and the corruptions of earth ; that they may be inspired with a sacred ardor, and emboldened with a holy courage, while they look upon the blissful result of their contest. *Write!*

and assure my saints in the earth that *these words* [or these things] *are true and faithful.* They are no fiction—none of those delusive phantoms which the world holds out as happiness, which only deceive and disappoint men.

6. *And he said unto me, It is done!* The volume of Revelation is completed ; there is nothing beyond this state in man's future glory that could be brought within his comprehension, even by any possibility of symbolical illustration. All emanations from the eternal world cease with the vision of the heavenly Jerusalem. All that man can know, until he reaches that glorious state, is now made known to him—the work of revelation *is done! I am Alpha and Omega. I was before all things. I spake and worlds came into existence. I commanded and they stood fast. I am the same now at the end of all things ;* [and by the same Almighty power] *I now make all things new.*

*I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life—freely.* A beautiful figure of speech—expressive of the fullness and uninterruptible state of the bliss, which is reserved for the righteous in the presence of God.

Here, from the very nature of man's existence—his indispensible relation to the things of this world, he can, at most, catch only a hasty draught from the secret stream which meanders its way for him into this world from the great fountain above. Crowded and urged on by duties and trials, by cares and anxieties, he can only sip as he goes ; but in that heavenly Jerusalem, he will calmly sit and drink from the *fountain* of heavenly joys—*freely—abundantly!*

*He that overcometh shall inherit all things.* There is a striking harmony between the sayings of our Lord in his sermon on the mount and these words of the great voice heard by the prophet—*Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God*—our Savior said. The words of the great voice are the echo of this saying—*Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth*—

are the words of Christ. The great voice responds—*He that overcometh shall inherit all things.*

We sometimes hear ministers of the gospel announce this saying of Christ—*The meek shall inherit the earth*, as a text for their discourse, and twist and torture scripture, and turn it and common sense too, almost upside down, to show that the meek do really inherit the earth *now!* While many, perhaps, who listen to their perversion of the text, are at the very time destitute of food convenient for their bodily wants, and the necessary raiment to clothe themselves with, or the most common shelter to protect them from the blasts of the wintry storm. To such people, having no better teachers, the gospel must ever remain an inexplicable mystery.

Besides, the notorious fact, that many of the meek, the most humble of God's people in this world, are in the most necessitous circumstances, suffering hunger and almost nakedness. The words of Christ are not—blessed are the meek for they *do* inherit the earth; but he said they *shall* inherit the earth.

This and many other like declarations of our Lord, can have no fulfillment in this present earth; it is in the *new earth*, and in the heavenly Jerusalem where all these prospective possessions are realized.

Now let us go with the prophet, and behold the glorious city—the heavenly Jerusalem—the symbol of the future possession of the saints.

I shall not disturb the scene of glory now about to spread out before us by dwelling upon the opposite picture of the eighth verse: Let him whose conscience tells him, *Thou art the man!* take timely warning and seriously ponder the solemn declarations of that verse.

9. *And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

10. *And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and*

*high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,*

11. *Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal:*

12. *And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.*

13. *On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.*

14. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

15. *And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.*

16. *And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs; the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.*

17. *And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.*

18. *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.*

19. *And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald:*

20. *The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.*

21. *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

22. *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

23. *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon,*

*to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

24. *And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.*

25. *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there.*

26. *And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.*

27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

In the ninth verse, the prophet tells us that one of the seven angels who poured the vials of wrath upon the former earth, now becomes the expounder of the scenes in the new earth.

*He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain.* The prophet guards us against falling into the error of giving a literal sense to those magnificent scenes he is about to describe, by the remark, *he carried me away in the spirit.* We are, therefore, to understand what follows in a spiritual sense.

*And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.* I will just remark here, as appropriate to what I have said on a previous occasion, that these cities, frequently spoken of in the Apocalypse, are of various signification.

In the eleventh chapter it is said, as the effect of the great earthquake, that a tenth part of the city fell. And in the sixteenth chapter it is said: *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell*, as a consequence also of what is called a great earthquake. And again in the eighteenth chapter, in describing the desolations of Babylon, the people are represented as bewailing her overthrow, saying, *Alas! alas! that great city, Babylon, that mighty city, for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

So that we are to infer the true character of the city spoken of by the qualifying circumstances connected with its history, or the description given of it.

The city now under description has its distinctive character in these peculiarities. It is the *holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God*, &c.

A more minute description of the city, and its walls and interior arrangements, occupy the remaining portion of this twenty-first chapter.

This account which the prophet gives of the city, beginning at the tenth verse and ending with the chapter, is a description so graphic that any remark upon it would seem to be superfluous. But still its riches and splendor invite, at least, an expression of the pleasure with which the contemplation of it must inspire every mind.

The whole city, as the prophet saw it, was covered with and reflected a light of unspeakable purity and brightness—a light undimmed by shadow, and before which the sun was rayless, and the night was lost in its effulgence. The wall surrounding the city was *great and high*, having twelve gates, and twelve angels occupying their positions at those gates. Knowing that angels and archangels once fell from heaven and lost their happiness forever, this great and high wall, guarded at its gates by heavenly sentinels, is the representation of the perpetuity of the bliss of those who dwell in the city, and the security against the introduction of any enemy to its peace. No such fall as that of the angels will ever be possible amongst the redeemed in heaven.

This city is altogether symbolical, and each of its different features has a separate and distinct signification. Its walls bear, in their structure, the names of the twelve apostles representing the Christian Church. The twelve gates have inscribed on them the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and signify the Jewish Church, both now united, and forming the heavenly Jerusalem. Properly speaking, it cannot be said there are gates in a wall until the wall

has been completed, and afterward the gates are set up. This figure accords with the opinion suggested in a previous chapter, that the Jews who renounce the Christian economy will, after that dispensation has been completed, enter into life through the recognition of its fundamental doctrine, viz.: that Christ is the Messiah, and that salvation to man is through his atonement.

The number of the gates, being three, in each angle of the wall, may represent the three dispensations, in all which the children of Abraham have been distinguished—the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian dispensation. In the two former, they alone were the depositories of the knowledge of the true God ; and in the latter, their zeal for God was none the less; but it was not according to knowledge, as St. Paul says. It was not consistent with God's plan, and they, in opposing the Christian economy, stumbled. Out of these three dispensations, the tribes of the children of Israel have access to the heavenly Jerusalem through the gates of the wall of the city.

It is well known that the Jews are scattered abroad even to the four quarters of the earth. They mingled with all nations, and are the oppressed and down-trodden in all lands ; but from all quarters of the earth they will come to *the great city, the holy Jerusalem.* This idea is expressed by three gates on the north, three on the south, and an equal number on the west and on the east, opening out to the four quarters of the earth.

The measurement of the city by the angel shows the equality of its dimensions, the length, and breadth, and hight, being the same, and it lieth four square. This can hardly be supposed to imply anything else than equality amongst the subjects of that heavenly world. None of those distinctions known to earth, which too often exalt vice and depress virtue, will obtain there. The only distinction there will be acquired by the development of man's intellectual powers, in which all will engage without restraint or disability arising

from any law of that government favoring one more and another less.

*The city lieth four square,* implies that in all its appointments, in its whole economy, there is universal harmony and perfection.

It may sound very strange to the ears of some to talk of law and government in heaven. But they should know that man, in his heavenly state, will be as much a subject of law under the divine government as he is here on earth. His future happiness there, no less than here, requires that he should be a subject of law. Without it, the heavenly state would become monotonous, if not chaotic. Government and law are necessary to keep him reminded of his *right to the tree of life,* and to assure him of the perpetuity of his felicity.

But I do not speak of law in heaven in the sense of a probation. It will not address itself to man's fears as it does now, for there will be no principle of fear in the heavenly world. The government there will ever present to man new and increasing sources of felicity, stimulating him to renewed developments of his high spiritual powers in order to the attainment of them.

Loose and incoherent notions of the heavenly state are extensively entertained even by very good Christians, and when expressed they show a lamentable deficiency in their knowledge of that improvement and dignity, both in the moral and intellectual man, which religion is designed to produce even in the present life.

The idea of the heavenly state, with many, goes no farther than supposing it to be some undefinable locality somewhere in the skies, where God will be seen, where near and dear friends, the former partners of the joys and the sorrows of an earthly existence, will meet together again, never more to part, and where a tumultuous kind of rejoicing will be their unceasing employment.

The scriptures impress upon us, in a variety of modes, the purposes of man's creation, his duty and his destiny ; and

they distinctly teach us this fact, that the present life is but the infant state of our being : here we take the first feeble steps towards the dignity and glory of our immortal state.

The purposes of the Christian religion are but poorly understood by those who look to it only as something which is to produce occasional impulses of joy—something to make men feel happy for a season, while they remain contented without those constant developments of increasing moral excellence and vigorous growth of virtuous principles, which are the proper fruits of religion, and the true elements of the Christian's happiness in this life. Opposed to the transitory and fitful seasons of joy which distinguish the religious experience of some, and which the scriptures characterize by the evanescent state of the morning cloud and early dew, we have the solemn injunction of divine inspiration, commanding us to *grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

What is growth but progression, and this progression will be the endless development of man's glorified nature in heaven, and from the continued enlargement and active employment of his moral powers all his happiness there will arise.

But let us now return and take a further view of the glorious city.

If we take the word *foundations* to signify what we mean by it in its application to buildings, we shall bury all the beauty and richness of the great wall of this city under ground ; but this was not the intention or meaning of the prophet in the description he gives of it.

The wall was built of precious stones or gems, twelve different kinds, corresponding with the twelve apostles, so disposed that each stratum of stone was a foundation for another stratum of a different kind. The first layer or stratum which appeared in the wall was the jasper, and when this was laid on it became the foundation for a stratum of a different stone, which was the sapphire ; upon this again was laid the chalcedony, and the fourth belt or stratum was the emerald,

and so on until the wall was completed, being built of twelve different strata of precious stones, each differing from the rest in color and quality, and each stratum or belt of the width of twelve cubits. Then the gates of the wall,—*each several gate was of one pearl,*—mingling their soft, transparent light with the brilliant richness of the wall. And to these we must add the palaces of gold which composed the city; *for the city was of pure gold like unto glass; and its street, which was also gold.* When the light which shone upon the city, and its walls and gates, was reflected on all sides like a sea of endlessly variegated fire, it must have produced a scene of gorgeous magnificence and grandeur, such as no mortal eye could look upon, and that no mortal mind can adequately conceive of.

The prophet proceeds with his description of the city, and says, (verse 22): *And I saw no temple therein.* This must do away with all idea that this city is a representation of the church in her militant state.

The religious services of the Jewish temple, as well as those of the Christian Church or temple, were designed to instruct men in the knowledge of God and his law. These temples are necessary in the present life, in man's probationary state.

But in the heavenly state, where man will dwell with God, and behold with open face the glory of God, there will be no need of temples. There will then be no necessity either f the typical moonlight dispensation of the Jews, nor the su light Christian dispensation; *for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it*, and shed the light of divine knowledge upon the ever-expanding powers of the souls of the redeemed.

Now, for the first time, the prophet speaks of the *inhabitants* of the city, (verse 24.) He groups them all together in one general term, and says: *And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it.* Those nations to whom Christ said, when he gathered all the nations before him at

his second appearing, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

Amongst the nations of the earth there are some renowned for the majesty and grandeur of their kingdoms. But whatever is great, or grand, or glorious, in the kingdoms of the present earth, will be lost and forgotten in the inconceivably greater glory and majesty of the government of that city.

We have no reason to suppose otherwise than that the hosts of heaven are under some such appointment and government as belongs to kingdoms in this present world. "Order is heaven's first law," and this order presupposes government under the glory of God and the Lamb, which lightens the city, imparts knowledge and wisdom to its spiritual inhabitants.

*The gates of the city are not shut by day,* [consequently they are ever open,] *for there shall be no night there.* The constantly-open gates of the city signify the peace and security which ever reign there, admitting of no apprehension or fear of disquietude from without.

The last verse of the twenty-first chapter states what shall not enter into the city: *Nothing that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.*

An evil principle can only be known by its practical operation; and the prophet, in showing what shall be excluded from that city, instead of saying, all moral defilement, and abomination, and lying, shall be excluded, shows that the most remote principle which could produce such evils will never exist there.

The thoughts of the heart, instead of being evil, as now, will ever remain holy, pure, and in perfect harmony with the divine will.

## CHAPTER XXII.

The description of the city is continued in the first five verses of the chapter.

1. *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

2. *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

3. *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:*

4. *And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*

5. *And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.*

This part of the prophet's description has reference to what we would call the pleasures of taste, such as gratify the appetite, while his preceding description was for the gratification of the eye.

The river of the water of life, represented as flowing through the street of the city, is a figure, the force and beauty of which can be appreciated only by the inhabitants of those climes where water is difficult to obtain, and where the earth is always parched and thirsty.

The river implies an abundance of all that is refreshing. *Thy peace shall flow as a river*, is one of David's poetic representations of the rich blessings enjoyed by the church.

The picture of the rich abundance and peace of that glorious state is completed by the river, clear as crystal, flowing through the street of the city, and the tree of life shading its entire banks on either side, and yielding its fruits constantly and in great variety—*bearing twelve manner of fruits*. Twelve is named as its variety ; but that number, as it comprehends the whole Jewish Church from the twelve tribes, and the whole Christian Church from the twelve apostles, signifies that the joys and pleasures of that state will be suited to the infinite variety of mind which will be filled with its happiness.

The next peculiarity of this tree is the remarkable sanative qualities of its leaves. *And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

This has led some to suppose that the city was the symbol of the church in her present state, as in the future state there will be no disorders to be healed.

But I think a better view, and one more consistent, may be taken of the meaning of this reference to the extraordinary virtues of the leaves of the tree.

The prophet says the *leaves* of the tree *were*, not *are*, for the healing of the nations, as if the tree had been formerly known only as a *leaf*-bearing tree. Is not the tree in its leaf-bearing state emblematic of Christianity in the present state of the world ? In this world the doctrines of the Christian religion, wherever they are faithfully preached amongst the nations, exert a wonderful influence in establishing peace and good-will amongst them. Even the forms of Christianity, its worship and its morality, are but its leaves. But these have had a most happy effect in mitigating the cruelty and the injustice which oppressed the nations, and in healing the disorders consequent upon sin and ignorance. What nation has the gospel reached that has not been healed of much of

its civil and moral disorders through its influence? In the present world we see but little more than these leaves of the tree of Christianity; but in the next world its delicious fruits, its glorious results, will appear. There we shall behold and forever enjoy its fruition on the banks of the river of life. There will be no more disorders there to be healed, for *there shall be no more curse* in that world.

But Christ settles this question as to whether this city, and its river, and its tree of life, are intended to represent the church in this world, when he says to his servant John, in the eleventh chapter and seventh verse of the Revelation, *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

In the fifth verse there is a repetition of what was said in the twenty-third verse of the preceding chapter, to the effect, that the glory and happiness of that heavenly city will not be dependent upon any instrumentality or secondary causes, great or small; neither the light of the sun, the highest order of Christian institutions in this world, nor the light of a candle, the feeblest and least enlightened systems of religion, will be known or needed there, *for the Lord God giveth them light.* They will draw directly from the fountain of infinite knowledge those supplies which will ever fill and enlarge their capabilities of happiness; and they shall reign in the enjoyment of this light forever and ever.

This completes the description of the glorious city. And what a description it is!—what a picture of unspeakable beauty and grandeur! Everything which imagination can suggest or the heart of man can desire to perfect his bliss is seen in this city. Riches, beauty, and magnificence, fill the whole range of his vision; and whatever can be conceived of, calculated to afford the highest enjoyment to the taste, is presented in the waters of its river and the fruits of its trees.

Some have imagined that such will be in reality the habitation of the saints in their future state, that they will dwell, literally, in such a city as is here described. But it is obvi-

ous that this is a mere representation of sensible objects, intended to produce a *moral effect*.

In our present life we are dependent so much upon our bodily senses, that we can hardly appreciate spiritual things unless they are presented to us through or by sensible objects. This was the manner of Christ's teaching while he was upon earth. He employed the occupations and pursuits, and the objects most desirable amongst men, to illustrate the doctrines and blessings of the gospel.

Pursuing the same method, his holy prophet illustrates the end, the consummation of Christianity by the glories of this heavenly city.

It is but right and altogether reasonable that we should judge of those systems devised by human wisdom by their results. And as by their fruits Christians are to be known amongst men, so by the fruit of Christianity, what it will ultimately work out, should *it* be judged.

Does Christianity present nothing to the worldly seekers of pleasure but a dull and joyless system of sacrifice and self-denial? Look at her end in that city just described. Is there any delight which the mind of man can enjoy that is not provided there?

Here, Christianity is often seen in dark and trying circumstances. But look at her in the light and glory which give perpetual day and joy in that city. Here she is seen in hunger and thirst. But behold that ever-flowing river of the waters of life, and the tree of life, with its inexhaustible productions of fruit! She is seen here in sickness and pain, but there sorrow and sighing flee away, and health ever blooms on the cheek of immortality, and death never enters there. Here she is seen in distress and poverty, in lonely hovels, in damp, chilling cellars, or crowded and feverish garrets; like her Author, not having a place of her own where to repose her aching head. But look at her in that city, dwelling in palaces of gold, surrounded by walls whose masonry is of

brightest gems, and its gates of pearl, and the street of the city of pure gold, transparent as glass.

On earth, Christianity is proverbial for her want of worldly glory; and the scorn and contempt of the great, and the ridicule of the ignorant, are more commonly her portion. But the glory and honor of the nations and the crowns of earthly royalty are laid at her feet in that city.

These are the contrasts which it is the purpose of this city of grandeur and magnificence to present to the earthly state of Christianity; and by the contrast of these sensible objects, we are taught that the felicity of the righteous in the next world will surpass all the happiness which earth can produce, as far as the magnificence and glory of this city surpass the frail and perishing structures of man's pride and boast in this world.

The remaining portion of the chapter is not descriptive, but it contains matter suggestive of duties which it is important to Christians gravely to consider.

6. *And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*

7. *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

8. *And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things.*

9. *Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book:* WORSHIP GOD.

10. *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.*

11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

12. *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

The truth of all that the prophet has seen and heard was confirmed to him by the angel, who said, by the appointment of the Lord God of the holy prophets, I am sent to reveal to you, and through you to all his servants, the things which must shortly be done.

*Behold I come quickly*, is an expression of frequent recurrence in this book, and implies not only that the events predicted will transpire in a way that will appear like a sudden occurrence, but it means also that these things will certainly occur.

*Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.* Some men have very little patience with any one who speaks of the Book of Revelation as a book to be read, and they deem it almost presumptuous to think of comprehending its meaning. But a blessing is here pronounced upon those who keep the sayings of this book. To be kept they must be understood, and none will be so weak as to pretend to understand them without reading them.

St. John affirms the truth of all that the book contains upon the evidence of his own senses. *I John saw and heard* these things. And he gives evidence of the effect they had upon him when he heard and saw them. He was so overwhelmed with the majesty of the scene, and the dignity and glory of the personage who pointed them out to him, that he concluded the interpreter must be a divine being, and as such, entitled to be worshiped. From this impression made upon the mind of the prophet, we can form some idea, very limited, however, of the glory of man's appearance and the greatness of his wisdom in his future state of happiness. It was such in the case of this angel, that even St. John fell at his feet to worship him. Yet this angel had been a dweller upon this earth. *See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.*

The angel instructed him not to seal—that is, not to conceal or keep secret the things he had seen and heard, but

to give them publicity, for the time is at hand. A practical illustration of these things was about to commence in the trials and sufferings of the seven Asiatic Churches, and would continue until the whole drama of the Apocalypse should be wound up, in the full fruition of Christianity, in this glorious city, the heavenly Jerusalem. *The time is at hand*—the short period of the Christian dispensation only intervening—when he that is unjust and filthy will ever remain in that condition without hope or means of recovery, and when they that are righteous and holy will ever remain in that state, without the possibility of falling from their state of moral perfection.

This is an allusion to that period which was frequently spoken of by our Lord and the apostles, and symbolically adverted to in the Book of Revelation, when the close of the gospel day would leave those who had rejected its counsels and its blessings in the darkness of moral night, and raise the righteous to life eternal. No change in the moral condition of either can ever occur after that period. They that are holy will ever remain holy, and they that are currupt will ever remain in the consequences of their moral defilement.

The twelfth verse reiterates the warning so frequently given: *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.*

13. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

14. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

15. *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

16. *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

17. *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him*

*that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

18. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:*

19. *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

20. *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

21. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

This portion of the chapter, from the thirteenth verse to its close, may be considered, generally, in the light of a proclamation by Christ himself, confirming the truth of all that had been stated by his angel, who was St. John himself, the term *angel* signifying those means or individuals employed by God to instruct his church and warn his enemies.

Christ first proclaims his own eternity in the same words he employed when he first appeared to St. John, (chap. 1, verse 8): *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.* Then he proclaims the two states in the next world, the one within the city, and the other without it. *Blessed are they that do his commandments;* such only enter into the city, while the vicious of every grade of crime are without in outer darkness.

All doubt of the divine authenticity of the Book of the Revelations must be removed by the next announcement of the proclamation, (verse 16): *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

The mysterious union of the Godhead and manhood is declared in these remarkable words: *I am the root*—the power from which David derived his being. I gave him his exist-

ence, and yet I am *his* offspring. My human nature, my earthly form and mold, I derived by natural descent from him.

The doctrine of this mysterious union is further confirmed by comparing the sixth with the sixteenth verse.

In the former it is said : *And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*

In the latter it is said: *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.* If words have any meaning at all, what other conclusion can a rational mind come to, but that the same power or person is referred to in both verses as sending the angel to testify these things to his servants, or, what is the same thing, to testify these things in the churches ?

Then follows the freeness and the fullness of the gospel of the grace of God, expressed in the universal invitation given to *all* to participate in its blessings. *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.* Who shall come ? *Him that is athirst ?* Nay. *Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* Who says man must buy his salvation from the church—must pay a price, an admission fee, for his entrance into heaven ? Hear the next part of the proclamation : *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

How is this adding to or taking from the things written in the book done ? It is done by those systems of faith and doctrine, set up by men, which conflict with the sayings of this book—teaching for Christian doctrine that which the word of God does not sanction.

Whoever teaches any other worship than that declared in this book—*worship God*—whether it be the worship of angels,

or saints, or images, adds to the things written in this book. Whoever imposes exactions upon men as the price of salvation, in any form, likewise adds to the things written in this book, and gives the lie to God's mercy. Whoever denies the salvation of God to any portion of mankind, under the pretext of decrees and councils from all eternity, do most awfully take from the sayings of this book, uttered in the seventeenth verse of this chapter : *Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

Whoever assumes the exclusive right to administer the gospel ordinances, under *their* peculiar forms, denying to all others the right of calling men to the water of life, take from the things written in this book, and violate Christ's proclamation in the seventeenth verse : *The spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.*

And whoever or whatever church substitutes the mere forms and ceremonies of worship for that devotion in which man is to consecrate his heart, soul, and mind, to God, takes from the words of the book, and forfeits *the things which are written in this book* for the consolation of them that worship God in spirit and in truth.

Whoever denies the divinity of Christ, and teaches that he is *not* the *root* of David, nor the bright and morning star—that he is no more than the *offspring* of David—that the spirit and light of the gospel, dispelling the darkness of the natural mind, do not proceed from him, such take from the words written in this book, unhinge the whole gospel plan of salvation, and do away with the only available sacrifice for the sin of the world. The denunciation against all such is: *God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

The proclamation concludes with the words : *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly.* To which the prophet adds, *Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

It was very natural that such an ejaculation should have been uttered by the prophet on its being announced to him

that the time would quickly come when all those sublime scenes he had witnessed would have their spiritual fulfill ment.

But even this prayer is prophetic : it is a fervent, short, and comprehensive prophecy. It is prophetic of what will become, ultimately, the sentiment of the whole church.

In the present day, and ever since the introduction of Christianity, the prayers and labors of the church have been directed to the conversion of sinners. For this her ministers have labored and suffered, and her members have prayed. Missionary societies, Bible and tract societies, have been appointed, and the church has thrown herself into every form of toil and patient labor which afforded any hope of saving men. The one great sentiment has been, and yet is, to press upon men the salvation of God.

But this is to have an end. The harvest will pass, and the summer of the gospel will end.

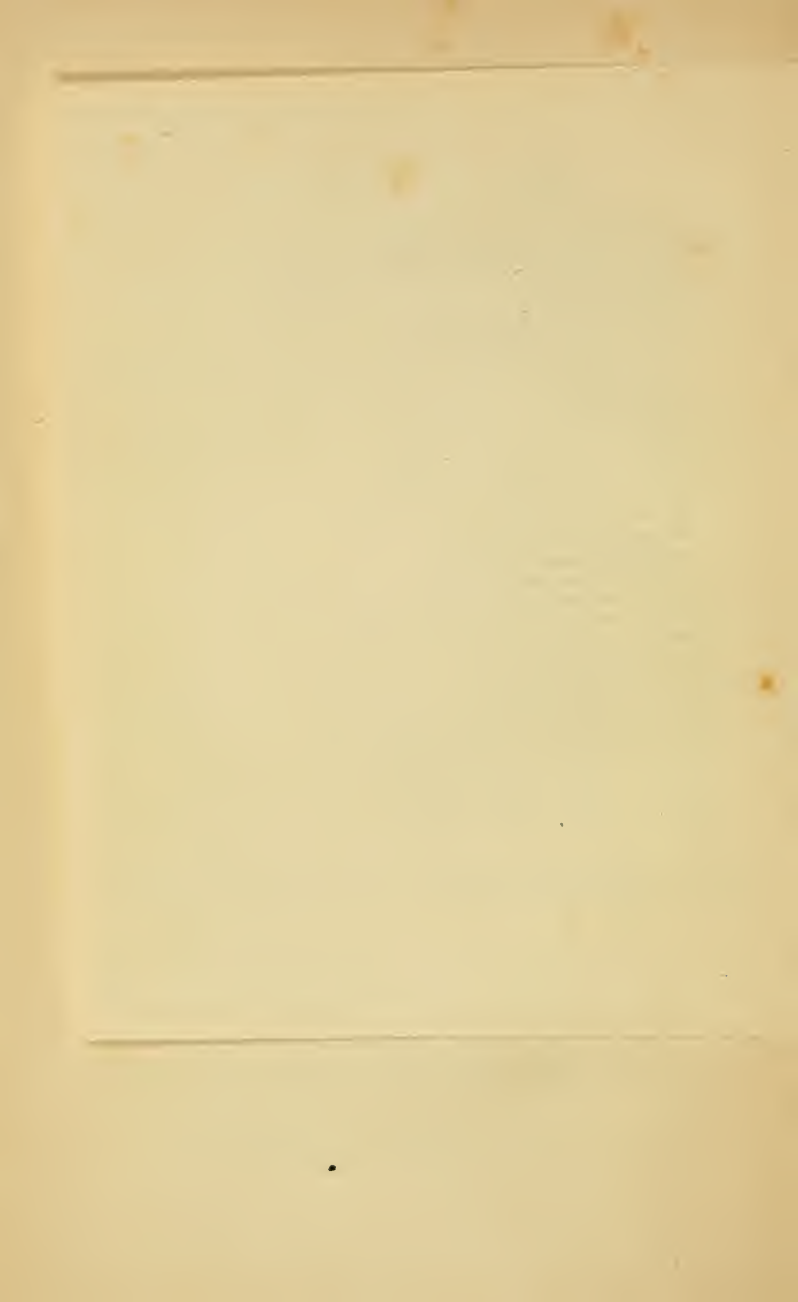
The world will become gospel-hardened, and the wickedness of men will wax bolder and become daring, defying God, and scorning the counsel of good men. As the gospel day declines, *perilous times shall come*, as St. Peter says, speaking of those times of abounding wickedness, when men will trample down all moral restraints, and the civil law itself will attempt in vain to curb the tumult and rage of ungodliness. When the signs of the times throughout the world will give no hope of any further extension of the gospel, then those labors and prayers, with all the means which Christian philanthropy has employed to save men, will cease, and the heart of the church will turn itself away from a world given up to crime and violence, and will look for the coming of Christ with fervent and impatient desire. Then will this short prayer of the prophet break from the heart of the whole church throughout the world : "AMEN. COME, LORD "JESUS."



## ERRATA OF VOL. II.

*Page* 12, *line* 11, *for* ministers *read* ministry.
" 14, " 23, *for* Christian *read* Christian religion.
" 23, *4th line from bottom*, *for* primitive *read* punitive.
" 33, *3d line from bottom*, *for* primitive *read* punitive.
" 40, *line* 9, *for* angel *read* angels.
" 41, " 3, *for* efforts *read* effects.
" 50, *after* "the end of the Ottoman Empire" *should be inserted the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th verses of the chapter.*
" 52, *line* 6, *for* traders *read* travelers.
" 56, *7th line from bottom*, *for* declaration *read* declamation.
" 59, *line* 1, *for* already *read* clearly.
" 74, " 16, *for* form in *read* from.
" 75, " 16, *for* effective *read* afflictive.
" 80, " 13, *for* fall *read* feel.
" 87 " 27, *for* memories *read* memorial.
" 93, *last line*, *for* them *read* him.
" 96, *line*, *for* near *read* now.
" 97, " 1, *for* 1896 *read* 1806.
" 98, " 23, *for* communication *read* explanation.
" 119, " 4, *for* removeth *read* removed.
" 139, " 14, *for* delivered *read* deceived.
" 169, " 30, *for* after that *read* after this the
" 173, " 18, *for* on *read* in.
" 212, " 29, *for* even since *read* ever since.
" 212, " 30, *for* 2·37 degrees *read* 23½ degrees.
" 251, " 31, *for* resurrection *read* natural.
" 262, " 10, *for* the earth *read* that earth.
" 281, " 3, *for* their generation *read* the regeneration.
" 303, " 7, *for* hurling *read* howling.
" 306, " 5, *for* himself *read* him

NOTE.—There are some other errors, of little consequence, which will also be corrected in the next edition.







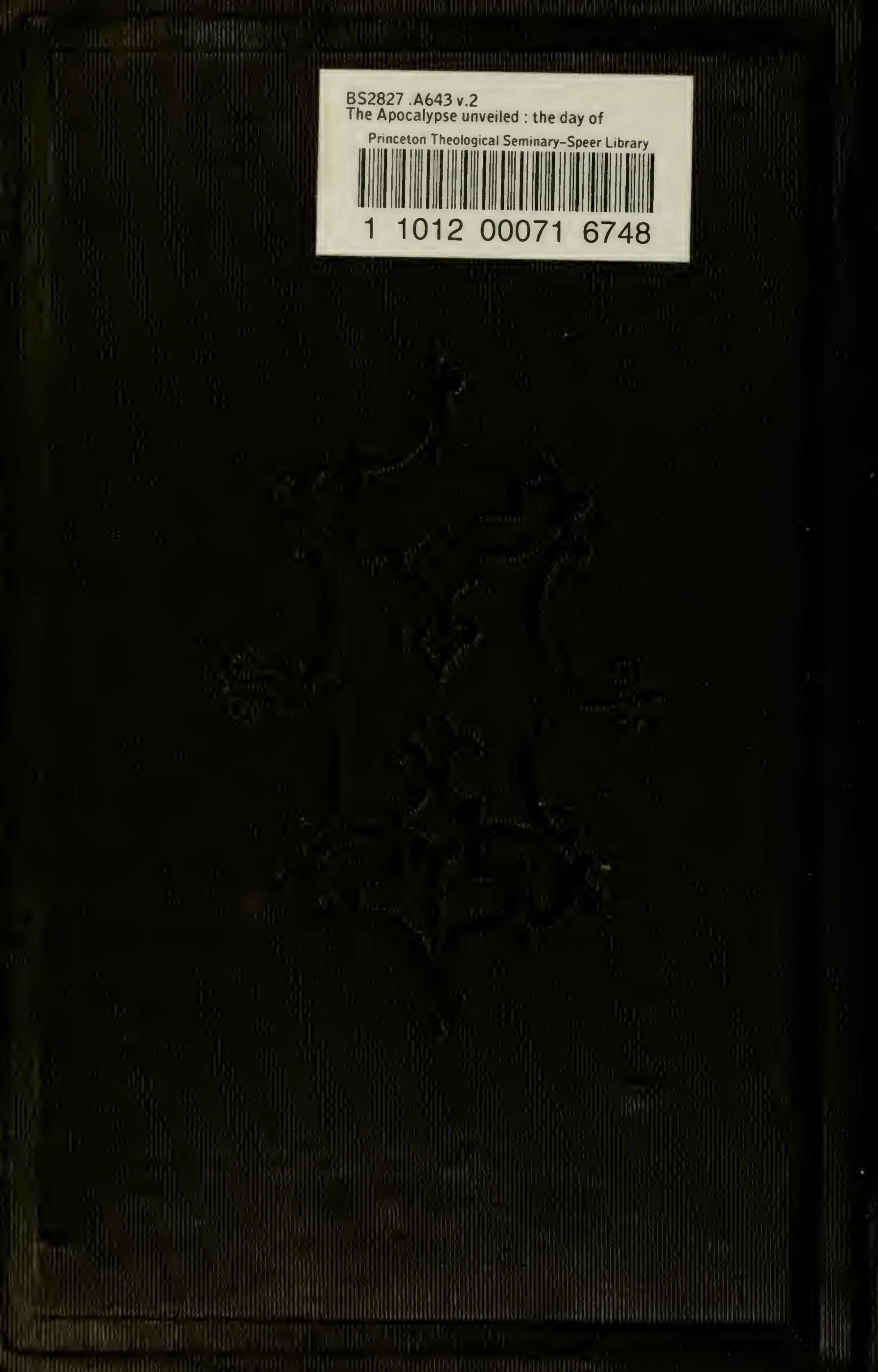












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